

Qatar opposes Iraq, Iran isolation

DUBAI (R) — Qatar is opposed to the isolation of either Iraq or Iran and called for Iraq's return to the Arab fold, the Qatari News Agency (ONA) reported on Sunday. Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Ben Al Thani told Doha Television on Saturday night: "Qatar does not believe in the policy aimed at shutting out Iraq or Iran," QNA reported. He was apparently referring to Washington's so-called dual containment policy to isolate both Iraq and Iran. "We disagreed with Iraq on the issue of occupying Kuwait and abided by the resolutions of international legality... but there is a humanitarian side; and that is not accepting the degradation of the Iraqi people," the minister added. "There must be dealings with Iraq now, in a humanitarian fashion, for its return to the Arab fold and in turn the international community," said Sheikh Hamad. But similar remarks last month by United Arab Emirates Defence Minister Sheikh Mohammad Ben Rashid Al Maktoum were received coolly by Kuwait. He had also urged Kuwait to let bygones be bygones. The Qatari minister was full of praise for Sheikh Mohammad for "expressing what is in the hearts of most Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states."

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Clinton vows doubled peace effort

Arab, Israeli and U.S. ministers meet in Washington

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — President Bill Clinton on Sunday opened a meeting of Arab and Israeli ministers meant to revive the troubled Middle East peace process, saying the United States would "redouble our efforts" to get it back on track.

The meeting, chaired by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, brought together foreign ministers from Israel, Jordan and Egypt and a top Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official.

The peace process has been deadlocked by Israeli-PLO differences over Palestinian self-rule plans.

"It is no secret to anyone in the world that we are at a critical moment in the peace process. We cannot allow the rise of terror again to threaten this peace," Mr. Clinton said.

"We are prepared in this country to redouble our efforts to get the peace process back in full gear. We are doing what we can on our own and with others to deal with the problem of terror,"

he said, without elaborating. "We cannot let people believe that they can disrupt the rational, humane, decent course of history by terror," he said.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Pososvayuk represented his government.

U.S. Vice President Al Gore and National Security Adviser Anthony Lake also joined in the opening.

Mr. Clinton hoped Sunday's meeting would establish specific steps the parties could take to keep the peace process going.

He said he was willing to go to Congress for duty-free treatment of goods from industrial zones on the West Bank and Gaza if the Israelis and Palestinians agreed to set them up.

"I am absolutely convinced we have to move as quickly as we can to prove that there are some economic benefits from peace," he said as the meeting opened at Blair House, an official government guest house opposite the White House.

The Israel-PLO talks are

stuck over Israel's demand for a Palestinian clampdown on militant groups and Palestinian demands that Israel lift its closure of the West Bank and Gaza and stop settlement activities in those areas.

Israel sealed off the areas

on Jan. 22 after a suicide

bomb killed 21 Israelis.

Sunday's meeting brought

together foreign ministers

Shimon Peres of Israel, Amr

Musa of Egypt, Abdul Karim

Al Kababri of Jordan and

senior PLO negotiator Nabil

Shaath.

It follows on from a Cairo

summit Feb. 2 of Egyptian,

Israeli, Jordanian and PLO

leaders which came up with

general declarations of

commitment to the peace process

but no new ideas for advanc-

ing.

The failure of Israeli Prime

Minister Yitzhak Rabin and

PLO Chairman Yasser Ara-

fat to resolve the issues divid-

ing them at a meeting last

Thursday convinced the PLO

of the need for U.S. interven-

tion.

The United States

apparently wanted to steer

clear of contentious issues at

Sunday's meeting and focus

on economic and other proj-

ects that can show a common

resolve to keep the peace

process going.

But the PLO has signalled

that it intends to bring up its

differences with Israel, and

particularly the closure of the

West Bank and Gaza which has

prevented tens of thousands

of Palestinians from going to

work.

The disputes are prevent-

ing progress on the next

phase of the 1993 Israel-PLO

peace agreement — Palestini-

an elections.

Despite the return of its

ambassador to Washington,

Syria's peace talks with Israel

remained suspended. And

new efforts to press Israel to

sign the Non-Proliferation

Treaty and open its facilities

to outside nuclear inspectors

could also slow progress.

A U.S. official who spoke

on condition of anonymity,

said negotiations were in "a

difficult period" and told re-

porters at the State Depart-

ment "don't expect the meet-

ing to suddenly transform

things."

Syrian Ambassador Walid

Al Moualem returned this

week from Damascus after a

lengthy absence, but he has

not rescheduled talks with

Israeli Ambassador Itamar

Rabinovitch that were sus-

pended in December.

Their quiet meetings in

Washington were the only

active contacts between Syria

and Israel, which have been

sparring for more than three

years over peace terms and

the future of the Golan

Heights, a strategic border

enclave.

Jordan, which signed a

peace treaty with Israel last

year, held out hope for a

successful ministerial meet-

ing. "We will try to accom-

plish as much as possible on

security and other obstacles,"

Ambassador Fayed Taraw-

neh said in an interview Fri-

day. "Jordan, with Egypt, is

in a good position to mediate.

We have good relations both

with Israel and the PLO."



American Jewish Committee President Robert Riffkind on Sunday presents a photograph representing peace to His Majesty King Hussein (Petra photo)

King: Jordan will set model for coexistence

American Jewish Committee ready to help Jordan consolidate peace

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday reaffirmed Jordan's commitment to not only consolidating peace with Israel but also to work in close cooperation with the Jewish state and provide an example of peaceful coexistence in the Middle

East.

The King, addressing an 82-member delegation of the American Jewish Committee, also said that the majority of Jordanians supported the Oct. 26 peace treaty with Israel and the overall Arab-Israeli peace process, but that

there were also forces seek-

ing to wreck peace.

The King said Jordan and

Israel were "looking at all

possibilities of joint ventures

of the resources available to us,

mineral resources, of the

land, of how to turn the

Jordan Rift Valley into a

green valley before too long."

He did not elaborate, but

was clearly referring to what

Israeli newspapers said were

intelligence reports Palestini-

an guerrillas planned to

carry out attacks in the run-

up to the first anniversary of

the February 25 Hebron mosque

massacre.

"Any responsible person

could not reach a decision (to

end the ban) this week," Mr.

Sarid told Israel radio about

the closure imposed after 21

Israelis were killed in Palesti-

nian suicide bombing on Jan.

22.

He did not elaborate, but

was clearly referring to what

Israeli newspapers said were

intelligence reports Palestini-

an guerrillas planned to

carry out attacks in the run-

up to the first anniversary of

the February 25 Hebron mosque

massacre.

"But at least, we're over

the perpetual nightmare ..

where for many, many years,

on both sides, we didn't know

what each day would bring,"

he said. "Now we know that

we have a new beginning and

a worthy one."

(Continued on page 7)

Sharif Zeid affirms firm position against corruption

Opposition alleges arbitrary moves; Hammad denies charge

AMMAN (Agencies) — Opposition groups Sunday accused the government of arbitrary arrests and torture in a crackdown on opponents of Jordan's peace treaty with Israel.

Iraqi Farhan, spokesman of the opposition coalition, alleged that Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker's government was waging a "bitter campaign against the opponents of the peace treaty and violating their human rights."

At least five weekly newspapers affiliated with opposition parties had been taken to court on "fabricated charges," he said, adding that the heads of four political parties were interrogated by security forces.

Among them was Babtah Abu Gharbiyah, head of a self-styled committee to fight normalisation of relations with Israel. Dr. Farhan said Mr. Abu Gharbiyah was questioned for three hours last week on charges he had formed an "illegal political group."

Dr. Farhan also announced a "popular congress against normalisation with Israel" which would take place in coming months.

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel will maintain its ban on

Palestinian entry for at least

another week but take a softer line in peace talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) if Yasser Arafat cracks down on militants, a cabinet minister said on Sunday.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, a member of

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Egypt refuses to budge on NPT

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, despite U.S. pressure, has stuck to his guns in a war of words with Israel over the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) due to be extended this year.

"All I can say is the day Israel signs (the extension), I will sign," Mr. Mubarak said in an interview published Sunday in the Arabic-language daily *Al Hayat* newspaper.

"Let's wait and see what the Israelis do. If they say they are going to sign in three or four years we will put down reservations for three or four years. Then we will sign together," Mr. Mubarak said.

He added he "can't foresee for now any other solution" to the problem.

The United States, which provides Cairo with \$2.1 billion in aid annually, has urged Egypt not to link its position to Israel's.

"Egyptian public opinion will not understand how Israel can keep nuclear weapons in times of peace. Nor will they understand its refusal to sign the NPT while Egypt is asked to do it," Mr. Mubarak added.

Egypt and the 169 other countries that have signed the treaty are to meet in April to decide whether to extend the treaty for an indefinite or limited period.

Israel, warning that it is still threatened by countries like Iran which are not involved in the Middle East peace negotiations, has refused to sign it and has never acknowledged possessing nuclear weapons.

However, Western experts say the Jewish state has about 200 nuclear warheads.

Mr. Mubarak's top advisor, Osama Al-Baz, said Saturday that "Egypt will decide its position independently and will not allow any country to influence its policy."

"Some Arab countries support Egypt's position," Dr. Baz said during a meeting with students at Helwan University in the Cairo suburbs.

He said the possibility of a reduction in U.S. aid because of its position on extending the NPT was "very limited."

"In any case Egypt is convinced that this aid will not continue indefinitely," he added.

The draft U.S. budget for fiscal year 1996 announced last week maintains aid to Egypt at last year's levels, including almost \$1.3 billion in military funding.

"Within the framework of the peace negotiations, Israel must agree to rid the region of nuclear weapons," Dr. Baz said. "Israel's refusal (to sign the NPT) will provoke instability in the Middle East."

Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid said in remarks published on Saturday that "some Arab countries are leaning towards signing without an Israeli commitment to do so."

A final decision on the issue will be taken during a ministerial meeting of the Arab League on March 22 in Cairo.

A senior foreign ministry official said Foreign Minister Amr Musa, who is due to attend talks Sunday in Washington aimed at unblocking the Arab-Israeli peace process, will also meet with members of the Republican-led Congress to ask for aid to be confirmed at current levels.

Egypt is currently modernising its army and the U.S. aid "cannot be regarded as negligible," Egyptian strategic studies expert Murad Dessouki said recently, but added that Cairo could turn to its Arab neighbours for help if the dollar flow dried up.



ISRAELI DIGS: Workers from the Israeli antiquities authority removing stones from the western wall in East Jerusalem as part of a new excavation. The operation is planned to end with the commemoration of what Israel considers as the 3000th anniversary of Jerusalem's founding in 1996 (AFP photo)

Syria, Lebanon to fight 'pressures' for peace

DAMASCUS (Agencies) —

Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad and his Lebanese counterpart Elias Hrawi agreed during talks in Damascus on Sunday to counter "increasing pressures" linked to the stalled peace talks with Israel, Syrian officials said.

President spokesman Jabbour Kourieh said the leaders co-chaired two sessions of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council over the weekend and held a closed-door meeting afterwards.

An official said the meetings were aimed at "countering increasing pressures which are being exerted on Syria and Lebanon with the aim of foiling the peace process."

He said both countries "are determined to continue their coordination and consultations despite all the pressures and other possibilities which might occur in the future."

The officials did not elaborate.

No tangible progress has been made in Israel's peace talks with Syria and Lebanon. Both countries want the Jewish state to withdraw fully from the Golan Heights, occupied from Syria in 1967, and from South Lebanon, occupied by Israel in 1982.

The official Syrian daily Al Baath reported U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher or Middle East peace coordinator Dennis Ross might return to the region to discuss how to break the deadlock of the Syrian and Lebanese peace tracks.

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Home News

NEWS IN BRIEF

King condoles the Adaleh family

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday visited Al Adaleh family in Thaniyah, near Karak, and conveyed His Majesty King Hussein's condolences to the family over the death of Ahmad Al Adaleh, Jordan's ambassador to Syria. Prince Hassan praised the late Jordanian envoy as a dedicated man who had worked with dedication to serve his country. Al Adaleh family thanked Prince Hassan for his visit and expressed their gratitude to the Hashemite leadership. Prince Hassan then joined worshippers attending the noon prayer at Al Thaniyah Mosque. The late Adaleh died early Saturday at King Hussein Medical Centre where he was receiving medical treatment. His body was laid to rest late Saturday in his hometown of Thaniyah. The Karak governor stood in for King Hussein in attending the funeral.

Ghosheh, UNRWA head hold talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Services to the Palestinians living in refugee camps throughout the country figured high during a meeting held Sunday between Director of the Palestinian Affairs Department Asem Ghosheh and Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) in Jordan Ele Saaf. Mr. Ghosheh and Mr. Saaf stressed the importance of coordinating joint efforts to prepare for the major donor countries' conference which will be held here on March 8. Mr. Ghosheh said the meeting comes at a crucial time, when UNRWA's budget makes it difficult for it to cope with the increasing demand for its services by the refugee community. Mr. Ghosheh called on the international community to support UNRWA's budget to enable it to provide health and educational services and job opportunities.

Gharaibeh inaugurates exhibition

AMMAN (Petra) — The University of Jordan President, Fawzi Gharaibeh, Sunday opened the second pharmaceutical week, organised by the Faculty of Pharmacy, and inaugurated the pharmaceutical industries exhibition held on the sideline of the week. On display at the exhibition, which is held under the theme "Towards an advanced national pharmaceutical industry," are drug samples produced by Al Hikmat Pharmaceutical Company, the Arab Centre for Pharmaceutical and Chemical Industries, Jordan Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company (JPM), Al Ram Pharmaceutical Industries Company and Dar Al Dawaa.

Chamber of industry invited to exhibit

AMMAN (Petra) — The Amman Chamber of Industry has received an invitation from the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry to take part in Muscat's third International Exhibition which will be held between Oct. 15 and 21 to coincide with Oman's celebrations of its national day. The invitation was contained in a letter from Yacoub Ben Hamad Al Harithi, president of the Omani chamber of Commerce and Industry to Khalid Abu Hassan, president of the chamber of industry.

JNRCs chief returns from Venezuela

AMMAN (Petra) — President of the Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRCs) Mohammad Al Hadid Sunday returned home after a five-day visit to Venezuela where he attended meetings of the vice presidents of the International Federation for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and participated in the Venezuelan celebrations for the centennial anniversary since establishing the Venezuelan Red Cross Society. In an arrival statement, Dr. Hadid said that the meetings discussed, among other things, issues pertaining to respect of international humanitarian law and promoting awareness about it, activities of the various Red Cross and Red Crescent societies worldwide, election of the standing committee members, in addition to a study on the need to revise some provisions of the charter of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Australian delegation due in Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — An Australian economic delegation led by Minister of Trade Bob MacMillan is due in Amman in Feb. 17 for a four-day official visit to Jordan. The delegation will hold talks with Jordanian private and public sectors on trade and economic cooperation. During the visit, the Australian minister will formally inaugurate a regional office of the Australian meat and livestock corporation. Agreement on the opening of the office was concluded between the Australian and Jordanian governments last Thursday in Amman.

120-year-old woman dies

IRBD (Petra) — A 120-year-old woman died here Saturday in her hometown of Kuf Kufya in the Irbid Governorate. Fatima Issa Al Omari, who was said to be born in 1875, was one of the few Jordanians to live so long. She was reported in good health until her death. The late Fatima is survived by more than 300 sons, daughters and grand children, according to Petra.

RJ to launch Amman-Osaka route

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Jordanian (RJ) will launch a new air route between Amman and Osaka, Japan, as of May. 10, to coincide with the start of the Jordanian Cultural Week activities, which will be launched by that time. Two weekly flights will be operating on this line to serve the passenger and cargo movement. This route will also help promote Jordanian tourism in Japan.

245 villages connected to power grid

AMMAN (Petra) — Some 245 villages, with a total of 3,990 houses, were connected to the national electricity power grid during the past two years at a total cost of JD 14.3 million, according to Director of the Jordanian Rural Electrification Project Samih Ujeilat. Mr. Ujeilat said the project management started this year to implement the second phase which includes supplying electricity to 146 villages inhabited by 30,000 people. He said the second phase, which will cost JD 4.9 million, will end by the beginning of 1996.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.
- ★ Film entitled "Mata-Hari" at the French Cultural Centre at 7:00 p.m.
- ★ Film entitled "Onkel Wanja" at Goethe-Institut at 7:30 p.m.
- ★ Play (in Arabic) entitled "Ye Who Are Hearing" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.
- ★ RAMADAN CONCERT Concert by Behar Rabadi at the Royal Cultural Centre at 9:00 p.m.
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- ★ RAMADAN CONCERT Concert by Behar Rabadi at the Royal Cultural Centre at 9:00 p.m.
- ★ EXHIBITIONS Exhibition of paintings under glass entitled "Oriental Roots" by Fatima Rabou at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ "Young America" exhibit (with photographs featuring Americans of all ages) at the American Center.
- ★ Exhibition of works by Qasim Al Samir at the Housing Bank Complex Gallery.
- ★ Book exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre. Also showing another exhibition of Arabic Calligraphy.
- ★ Exhibition of the works of Lebanese artist Amin Al Basha at Darat Al Funan. Also showing works by contemporary Arab artists.
- ★ Educational works depicting the life of "Voltaire" at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of works by Hala Makhayni at the Petra International Hotel in Aqaba.

Agreements to help improve investment climate in Kingdom

AMMAN (Petra) — To provide information about investment opportunities and contribute to creating a proper investment climate, the Investment Promotion Department (IPD) Sunday concluded three agreements with three local consulting companies to undertake studies on industrial, agricultural and tourist investments in Jordan.

Under the industrial investments agreement, a local consulting company specialised in setting up industrial projects is asked to identify 15 projects covering various parts of Jordan. The company then prepares its studies and submits them to the IPD within 105 days after the day of assigning it the work. Costs for projects in this sector will range from JD 50,000 and JD 1 million.

Under the second agreement, which covers the agricultural sector, a local company specialised in engineering and management of agricultural projects has been assigned to identify 60 investment opportunities in this field before the end of March 1995.

The third agreement, which covers the tourism sector, provides for identifying and doing the preparatory work for 15 investment opportunities, including the construction of tourist hotels, establishing restaurants, rest houses, parks and towers in hilly areas, ranging in height from 70 to 80 metres, in addition to constructing swimming pools, chalets and gardens in the Jordan Valley.

The agreements were signed for the IPD by its Director General Asem Hindawi and for the companies by their respective directors general.

Journalists' roundtable to be held

AMMAN (U.N. Information Service) — As a means to raise media awareness and to spark discussions on the issues of the upcoming World Summit for Social Development, the United Nations Department of Public Information in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCAWA), is organising a journalists' roundtable on Feb. 15 and 16.

During the two-day roundtable, about 15 prominent journalists from various Arab countries will participate in a panel discussion on social development issues. In addition, short briefings on the social summit and its goals will be given by ESCWA executive secretary Dr. Hazem Al Beblawi, United Nations Development Programme Resident Representative Osman Hashem, Department of Public Information Representative Marian Awwad and Human Development Section Chief/Social Development Issues and Policies Division Dr. George Kossai.

During the panel discussion, chief editors and prominent journalists from Al Ahram, Al Hayat, Al Sharq Al Awsat, Al Ayyam, Al Nahar, Al Safir, Al Qabas, Yemen Times, Al Dustour, and Al Rai will discuss the issues of the summit as well as the role of the media in raising public awareness.

The World Summit for Social Development, scheduled to take place in Copenhagen between March 6 and 12, 1995, will address three core themes: alleviation and reduction of poverty, expansion of productive employment and enhancement of social integration.

Brig. Gen. Koublan said that most violations committed against children were "in most cases attributed to parents' negligence."

Many children are exposed to psychological and physical abuse because they are left alone in the streets without appropriate attention, according to Brig. Gen. Koublan.

Traffic Department statistics of 1994 indicate that children under the age of 10 registered the highest numbers of run over, that lead to the death of 93 children, with 192 people being run over last year.

Between the years 1990

First stages of anti-desertification project completed east of Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — The first and second stages of a project to fight off desertification and improve soil fertility have been completed in a semi-desert area 30 kilometres south east of Amman and it is hoped that work on the third stage will begin during this year, according to Dr. Awni Tueimeh, the project's technical director.

The project, conducted by the University of Jordan in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture with financing from the European Union (EU), is being implemented on a 2,000-dunum plot of land in the badia region, located 14 kilometres east of Maqqaq, said Dr. Tueimeh Sunday.

He said that the cost of the four-year project is estimated to be JD 2,565 million. The EU will be providing 60 per cent of the cost and the rest will be provided by the University of Jordan.

The land where the project is being implemented, Dr. Tueimeh said, is part of Jordanian areas that receive between 100 and 200 millimetres of rain only. Such land is estimated in Jordan to be of a 12-million-dunum

area, accounting for 13 per cent of the Kingdom's total surface, according to Dr. Tueimeh.

The participating parties in the project have conducted a feasibility study and worked out a plan which would help people develop arid regions and make them productive, said Dr. Tueimeh.

The project, conducted by the University of Jordan in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture with financing from the European Union (EU), is being implemented on a 2,000-dunum plot of land in the badia region, located 14 kilometres east of Maqqaq, said Dr. Tueimeh Sunday.

He said that the plan entails growing shrubs and forest and fruit tree saplings and water harvesting methods as well as the collection of rain water in pools, said Dr. Tueimeh who stressed that these steps are vital to stop desertification which is encroaching from the east.

Preliminary studies, he noted, have shown that the encroachment of the desert happened only in the past few decades and that the lands in the badia region still hold productive potentials.

Leaving the badia region.

Shrwei explained. Dr. Shrwei attributed the change in crime trends to an increase in urbanisation over the past 20 years which led to overcrowding, increase in poverty, unemployment and the presence of foreign workers who mix in the Jordanian economic and social life.

"If you look at previous years, they were hard years economically, politically and socially; we noticed forced migration and the country experienced return migration causing high unemployment and poverty," he said.

In the meantime, fraud registered a 29.4 per cent increase, PSCID statistics indicate.

Brig. Gen. Koublan said that the reason fraud cases increased is that many people wanted to make a quick profit and were not cautious and careful of what they deal with, thus falling victims to frauds.

The official also pointed to a rise in the number of people being killed as a result of firing live ammunitions during weddings, and called on the society to try to abandon such habits.

Four people were killed and more than 50 injured in 1994 as a result of these firings, said Brig. Gen. Koublan.

In 1986, PSCID indicated that there were 19,597 crimes of all kinds, of which 16,625 were misdemeanour. There were 66 murder cases the same year. In 1990, the total number of major crimes jumped to 21,885 and there were 84 murder cases. In 1991, the total numbers saw another jump, with 26,213 crimes on various counts, with 4,003 major statistics showed.

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Between the years 1990

Dr. Batayneh announced that the Health Ministry will soon increase the Iman hospital beds from 85 to 110 to cope with the demand on hospitalisation services.

He said that the ministry will also set up a residential quarter for the hospital nurses, noting that the ministry will also study the condition of the hospital workers with a view to increasing the local communities.

wages as they are far less than those of the nurses and assistant nurses.

The minister promised to increase the basic salaries of these workers.

Accompanied by Dr. Ziyad Abahda, director of the Health Department, the minister toured the Iman hospital sections and was briefed on the services offered to the public.

Jordan should comply with AI plan of action for its office to reopen

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A visiting Amnesty International (AI) team said human rights groups Jordan should comply with a strict plan of action in order to reopen AI office in the Kingdom.

In the first stage of the project, said Dr. Tueimeh, a survey of the soil was conducted and detailed maps of each type of soil were prepared, followed by a survey of the wild plants existing in the badia region, according to Dr. Tueimeh.

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Leaving the badia region.

In the course of the project, said Dr. Tueimeh, the concerned parties have launched a public awareness campaign aiming mainly at orienting farmers on ways to protect the land.

Khader said.

The secretaries committee also formed a questionnaire, to be distributed randomly to secretaries in Amman, Irbid and Zarqa, to study the concerns, history and other problems that might face the secretaries.

Ms. Khader said.

The questionnaire intended to study all aspects of abuse the secretaries face, their work stability, low wages and, most important, to get exposed to the reality of their problems and set our priorities based on it," said Ms. Khader.

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Addressing members of the committee which was established to study and legislate for internal laws and legislation for the secretaries union was formed and is currently being studied for approval before it is submitted to the Ministry of Labour on the day of the lecture.

The JWU move came after complaints that most secretaries received less than the minimum wages and some of them do not even get paid if they work extra time," she said.

According to Claire Salah, director of students affairs at Al Wasithi Secretarial Training Centre, secretaries wages have been declining in the 1990s.

She said that between the year 1980 to 1985, a secretary's fare used to range between JD120 and JD150 for beginners. These days, she said, the wages declined to JD60 to JD80 for a beginner.

"What would such an amount of money do for these secretaries? Half of it goes for transportation and the other half for food," said Ms. Salah who is responsible for more than 350 students who will graduate to become secretaries.

The secretaries committee suggested inviting experts in the secretarial field to lecture on March 8, Ms. Khader said, adding that the JWU is suggesting asking deputy Mustafa Shneikat, Ifat Halash, director of the Women's Department at the Ministry of Labour, Yousef Abu Dieh, director of the Wasithi centre, and a secretary to talk about the problems, the secretaries face at work, their dreams, ambitions and demands.

According to Ms. Khader, the JWU intends to announce the results of the questionnaire on Labour Day, May 1.

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The secretaries committee suggested inviting experts

Mexican army's manhunt for guerrilla commander grinds on

Protesters seek end to Chiapas crackdown

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (R) — The Mexican army's manhunt for masked guerrilla leader Sub-commander Marcos continued as the government tightened its clampdown on indigenous rebels in the southern state of Chiapas.

With first blood drawn after two soldiers were shot and killed Friday in rebel territory, security forces consolidated their control of the guerrillas' best-known jungle base at Guadalupe Tepeyac, about 80 miles (130 km) southeast of this colonial city, bringing in light tanks and armoured troop vehicles.

The National Defence Ministry said 2,500 troops, 33 aircraft, 30 tanks and 32 armoured vehicles were in-

volved in the operation launched Thursday that brought at least a dozen formerly rebel-held towns under military control in what the government says is a legal action, not military.

Com. Marcos, in an interview published Saturday by La Jornada newspaper in Mexico City, struck a defiant tone and pledged drawn-out guerrilla warfare if the clampdown continued.

"What is coming, if nobody stops it, is guerrilla war," Com. Marcos said in an interview apparently carried out Thursday in Guadalupe Tepeyac. "They are heading us towards long-term, debilitating armed resistance... we will win."

An officer commanding for

government paratroopers who entered the guerrilla base Friday said mainly old men and women and young children had been found in the village, and very few young men of fighting age remained there.

"It seems there were no transgressors here, they had probably fled," he said. Newspaper reports said the army found several Chiapas towns all abandoned as where the rebel column was seen headed.

A spokesman for the National Defence Ministry told Reuters Saturday that the soldiers, one a colonel, were shot in an ambush by several rebels when their column of armoured vehicles entered the town of Nuevo Monon west of Guadalupe Tepeyac. The attorney general's office earlier said that only the colonel had died in the attack, which it attributed to a lone sniper.

Mexican News Agency Notimex said another 10 troops were injured in the

6,000 people in recent months, into rugged, jungle-covered mountains to the north.

Government troops blocked access to the conflict zones to virtually all journalists and appeared to be cutting off roads out of the area to prevent Com. Marcos' escape. His whereabouts were unknown, but his refuge was believed to be in the area where the rebel column was seen headed.

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Mexican News Agency Notimex said another 10 troops were injured in the

attack shattered a ceasefire which had held since mid-January 1994 following the New Year's Day uprising by the Zapatistas to demand indigenous rights and greater democracy.

President Ernesto Zedillo ordered the arrest of Com. Marcos and identified him for the first time as Rafael Sebastian Guillen. The identity of the charismatic leader had been a mystery, hidden behind a trademark ski mask. Mr. Zedillo ordered the



Mexican army patrols enter the restricted road to Guadalupe Tepeyac from Los Margaritas, Chiapas, 78 kms southeast of San Cristobal De Las Casas. The army has restricted all access to their areas of operation as they search for

Com. Marcos and other Zapatista leaders.

(AP photo)

ern told him to act now or "his days as president of Mexico were numbered."

Two of the five alleged Zapatista leaders ordered held by Mr. Zedillo were arrested Friday in Chiapas.

The hope, one government official said, was that cutting off the leadership of the Zapatistas would lead to their disbandment as a military force.

Despite the fatal attack in Guadalupe Tepeyac, there appeared to be little rebel resistance to the military advance as the Zapatistas, said to number up to 12,000, melted away in the face of the heavily armed security forces.

"This is not authoritarianism or political hardening," the statement said. Mexico City newspaper El Financiero, citing an unnamed source close to U.S. intelligence agencies, reported Saturday that Mr. Zedillo ordered his crackdown after Mexican Armed Forces lead-

ers told him to act now or "his days as president of Mexico were numbered."

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Honest Beijing cab driver returns 81 years' wages

BEIJING (R) — An honest Beijing cab driver returned to a Russian woman passenger a lost bag containing the equivalent of a lifetime's wages for the average urban Chinese, the Beijing daily reported Sunday. On Friday afternoon the woman took a taxi from Beijing's most expensive department store to a nearby hotel where she got out, leaving behind her bag containing 250,000 yuan (\$30,200), it said. An hour later, she found her bag was missing but did not know the name of the driver or his company. In a panic, she had a friend call the city taxi hotline and left her number. Five minutes later, the operator called back to say that the driver had already handed in the bag. "I could not imagine this would happen," the paper quoted her as saying. "If this were Moscow, there is no way I would have got the money." Her hotel overlooks a street popular with Russians who buy large quantities of clothes, coats and jackets which they take home and re-sell. The average urban Chinese in 1994 earned 3,150 yuan (\$373), official figures show.

Paul McCartney composes classical work

LONDON (R) — A classical work for piano by Paul McCartney will be premiered at a special charity dinner hosted by Prince Charles next month, the Sunday Telegraph newspaper said. "The Prince of Wales has invited the former Beatle... to play at a £250 (\$280) a head dinner to raise money for the Royal College of Music, of which the prince is president," the newspaper said. McCartney, 53, will not himself play the solo piece for piano entitled *A Leaf*. Instead, it will be performed by Russian Anna Alexeyev, a former student at the college.

Woman arrested for smuggling diamonds

JOHANNESBURG (APP) — A Belgian woman was arrested as she attempted to leave South Africa with some one million rand (\$282,000) worth of diamonds hidden in her vagina, police said Saturday. The unnamed 48-year-old woman was detained shortly before she was due to board a flight to Germany. The congress voted to expel all UNITA members who had agreed to enter the National Assembly in the capital, Luanda, and demand the readmission of other deputies who had remained loyal to the leadership.

The rebels consider the Assembly government-controlled.

'Lion King' artwork brings record

NEW YORK (AP) — An auction of artwork from Disney's *The Lion King*, the top-grossing movie of 1994, raised almost \$2 million Saturday, a record for animation art. The standing-room-only sale at Sotheby's attracted a wide range of bidders, from seasoned collectors to parents with young *Lion King* fans, said Frances Ingersoll, the Auction House's animation art specialist. The highest price paid at the 256-piece auction was \$39,100 for an image of the Lion cub Simba with Pumbaa and Timon the meerkat. The image, which went for almost eight times the pre-sale estimate, was bought by a private European collector.

Explicit Demi Moore poster upsets land of 'Ooh-la-la'

PARIS (AFP) — An explicit poster of film star Demi Moore showing her straddling actor Michael Douglas with her skirt pulled up has been ordered removed from billboards in three French towns. The life-size posters advertising Barry Levinson's film *Disclosure* have been removed in Versailles, west of Paris, Arcachon, on the Atlantic coast, and Aix-en-Provence, southeastern France. In Arcachon, Pierre Lataillade said "I received many complaints from parents who think the advertisement should be less suggestive."

Reconciliation ceremonies to mark anniversary of Dresden bombings

BONN (AFP) — Germans, British and Americans Monday mark the 50th anniversary of the wartime Dresden bombings in a city rebuilt upon the ashes of the Allies' unprecedented firestorm.

On Feb. 13 and 14, 1945, Allied bomber planes reduced the old German city of Dresden, which was filled with civilian refugees fleeing the Russian advance, to a great blazing ruin.

Estimates of the number of people who died in the inferno vary widely. Those based on records available today put the figure at 25,000-35,000, but a toll of as high as 300,000 is also mentioned.

On one aspect of the event, however, the historians are near-unanimous. There was very little military-strategic justification for wreaking such thorough death and destruction on the city.

Rather, as a German-based British diplomat commented this week in connection with the 50th anniversary commemoration of the bombing of Dresden, "it was one of those things that happen when war takes place."

The principal aim of the bombing, in a war which was characterised by aerial

attacks on civilian targets on both sides, had been to demoralise the Germans and break the resistance of Hitler's Third Reich.

The British, Americans and Russians agreed at their Yalta conference that Dresden should be hit, to prevent the Germans from using it as a rallying point against the Russian advance, according to British sources.

For weeks the chief of Britain's Bomber Command, Air-Marshal Arthur "Bomber" Harris, had been planning a "double strike" against Dresden, and now the weather was right. In the event there was a triple strike and more.

The first warplanes set out with incendiary bombs to illuminate the city.

In two separate raids three hours apart on the night of Feb. 14 came a third raid, this time carried out by 311 US B-17s, which dropped 771 tonnes of bombs in the space of 20 minutes. The Americans bombed Dresden again on Feb. 15 and March 2.

The city was razed practically to the ground, with just stumps of buildings among the flattened rubble. Most of the bodies were unidentified cinders. In the city cemetery they buried human ashes by the cubic metre.

The poet Gerhart Hauptmann wrote: "He who has forgotten how to weep, learns to cry again with the going down of Dresden."

Famed for its artistic culture, the city had been known as "the Florence on the Elbe."

The ceremonies in Dresden will be an expression of reconciliation between Britain and Germany in particular, and among those participating will be the Bishop of Coventry and Coventry's Lord Mayor.

In the first attack, 244 Lancasters dropped over 800 tonnes of bombs. In the second, 529 Lancasters dropped more than 1,800 tonnes.

EU aims to resolve TV quotas row

BORDEAUX, France (AFP) — European Union culture ministers meet here Monday for talks aimed at resolving deep differences over how to support Europe's audiovisual industries against American and Asian imports.

At the heart of the two-day brainstorming session will be the future of EU broadcast quotas designed to help the European film industry turn back the tide of Hollywood domination.

The quotas, which date from 1989, mean general TV stations are obliged to ensure that a majority — 51 per cent — of their programming is of European origin.

But the addition of a "where practicable" condition and other loopholes have limited the impact of the "Television Without Frontiers" directive.

According to the European Commission, non-European material accounts for between 55-60 per cent of TV programming and 80 per cent of films shown in the 15 EU countries.

And Britain, whose former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was instrumental in having the "where practicable" clause inserted, is fighting a legal battle in the European court over whether it can be forced to implement the directive.

France has made updating the directive a priority of its six-month term of office, which ends in June, and its concern about a perceived threat to European cultural

Manila: China cut back force in Spratlys

MANILA (R) — China has withdrawn seven of the nine ships it deployed around a coral reef claimed by the Philippines in the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, military officials said Sunday.

But the situation remained a cause for concern because the two Chinese vessels still in the area of Mischief Reef are both warships, said the officials who asked not to be named.

A cluster of structures erected by the Chinese above the reef was also still there, the officials said.

It was not clear whether the seven vessels which had left would return. Aerial reconnaissance showed the ships had left by Thursday morning and had not returned Saturday afternoon, they said.

Ramos goes into elections with little opposition

MANILA (Agencies) — Three months from national elections, an alliance negotiated by President Fidel Ramos with the main opposition may return the Philippines to a virtual one party

party, was the NPC's "winning issue."

At Sen. Macea's side, Rosemarie "Baby" Arenas, known as Mr. Ramos's former mistress, said the president was "doing a good job. On a scale of one to 10, I give him a rating of nine," Ms. Arenas added, in an effort to justify her election bid, that the presence of opposition senators would "really help him."

The Inquirer newspaper said in a recent editorial: "This is probably going to be one of the most lopsided senatorial polls in post-war Philippine history. The opposition parties enter the race with tremendous handicaps. They don't have nationwide party machines and suffer from meager resources compared to those of the administration ticket enjoys the advantages of incumbency."

The main force against Mr. Ramos is the Roman Catholic Church.

After Pope John Paul II's triumphant visit to Manila in January, the church called for Filipinos to vote for candidates who oppose birth control, which was promoted by the popular minister of health, Juan Flavie.

Since then Mr. Flavie has left his position, at Mr. Ramos's request, to run for the senate and was replaced by a man seen by the church as more sensitive to its views.

The satisfaction displayed by the Archbishop of Manila, Cardinal Jaime Sin, suggests Mr. Flavie's departure may have resulted from a compromise with Mr. Ramos to moderate the church's strong feelings ahead of the elections.

Commenting on Mr. Ramos's growing power,

LISBON (AP) — The national congress of Angola's rebel movement overruled military hardliners Saturday by confirming its acceptance of peace accords to end the civil war.

The rebel UNITA's Radio Vorgan said 2,000 delegates meeting in the central Angolan town of Baiundo approved 21 resolutions backing the peace deal signed November in Lusaka, Zambia, and welcoming the impending dispatch of 7,000 UN peacekeepers.

But the radio, monitored by Portugal's news agency (LUSA), said military hardliners in rebel ranks had gone along with the plan only after "decisive persuasion" from rebel UNITA chief Jonas Savimbi.

The rebel military brass, still smarting from military setbacks at the hands of government troops last fall, spoke out Friday for rejec-

tion of the accords and a return to war.

The truce that followed the accords has been tenuous but many observers judged Friday's belligerence stances to be mostly political bluff.

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Peruvian commandos wait at the El Milagro army fort in the Department of Amazonas for deployment to a combat zone at

the border with Ecuador (AFP photo)

Fierce Bihac fighting 'endangers truce'

SARAJEVO (AFP) — Fierce fighting in the Bihac region over the last few days threatens to undermine the fragile ceasefire in Bosnia, a spokesman for United Nations peacekeepers said Sunday.

The commander of Bosnian forces, General Rasim Delic, meanwhile, accused U.N. forces of failing to meet their commitments under the six-week-old ceasefire. In a letter to General Rupert Smith, commander of the U.N. Protection Force, Gen. Delic said he would boycott peace talks scheduled for next Wednesday.

At least one person was killed and several were wounded Saturday during artillery battles in Bosnia's northwest Bihac enclave.

The fighting put new pressure on the Dec. 24 ceasefire, which has generally held elsewhere in the former Yugoslav republic since going into effect Dec. 31.

The U.N. spokesman, Major Herve Gourmelon, said the recent clashes pitting Bosnian government forces

against Bosnian Serbs and secessionist Muslims "endanger the ceasefire and the peace process."

He said the U.N. had not been able to tell who was to blame for fierce fighting Saturday between Bosnian government forces and Bosnian Serbs in the area of Bosanska Krupa, a Serb-held town east of Bihac.

Those clashes followed artillery battles for control of water supplies to Bihac and fighting around Velika Kladusa, headquarters of the secessionist Muslim leader Fikret Abdic, whose forces are backed by Croatian Serbs.

Gen. Gourmelon said U.N. staff recorded about nearly 1,500 incidents of gun, mortar and tank fire during the fighting Saturday.

According to local Bosnian sources cited by the United Nations, Mr. Abdic's forces launched two battalion-level attacks Saturday south and east of Velika Kladusa. The town was recaptured in December by Mr. Abdic's

Party row over Europe may engulf Major

LONDON (R) — Can John Major's government survive until the next general election?

The British prime minister has defied the odds many times before. But after a week of infighting over Europe that was extraordinary even by the standards of his ruling Conservatives, political observers are wondering how long he can stagger on.

"If and when historians chronicle the strange death of Tory Britain, they may cite this week as the one which sealed its fate," the Economist, a highly respected weekly newspaper, said.

"Before, the government seemed doomed if it could not resolve its decisions on Europe. Afterwards, it seemed doomed never to resolve them," it added.

The Conservatives' debate over Europe often seems abstruse, especially when it gets bogged down, as now, in nuances over whether Britain's participation in a future single currency would have "constitutional" or merely "political" consequences.

The Conservatives are renowned for their instinct of self-preservation. But some admit privately their divisions over Europe may run so deep that the party will split over it.

Rangoon troops step up bombardment of Karen camp

MAE SOT, Thailand (AFP) — Burmese troops Sunday stepped up their artillery bombardment of the Karen guerrillas' last stronghold on the border with Thailand.

And with the largest remaining Burmese rebel group determined to defend Kawmoora camp "to the death," diplomats and military experts say the Rangoon military junta risks paying a heavy material and political price for the assault.

Intense shelling on the Karen National Union (KNU) camp at Kawmoora began Saturday night. Government artillery fired a round a minute for 90 minutes, a border source said. Small arms fire backed up the barrage.

The attack resumed before dawn Sunday with artillery bursts heard clearly just across the border in the Thai town of Mae Sot.

Kawmoora, a camp on the Moei River surrounded on three sides by Thai territory, is the last major base of the Karen rebels, who have

fought successive Rangoon regimes for autonomy since 1948.

It came under intense attack again in late January when Burma's ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) launched a concerted campaign to end ethnic Karen resistance.

Government troops have already lost at least 130 men in the Kawmoora siege while the rebels put their death toll at just six. And experts say taking the stronghold could take many days, if not weeks.

One Western diplomat in Bangkok said the Burmese government could lose several hundred troops in the battle while at the same time seeing its credibility take a new battering.

Burma has already faced international criticism by ending its ceasefire with the Karen. Even Thailand, which led attempts for a "constructive engagement" with Rangoon, has been angered. A Burmese attempt to get to Kawmoora through Thailand last week was fought off and Thai territory is sporadically hit by Karen and student guerrillas.

In the combat zone in Ecuador, two soldiers reported missing showed up alive and were taken to a hospital for treatment of wounds. Red Cross officials in the zone said Ecuador had four Peruvian prisoners.

Mr. Fujimori meanwhile dismissed suggestions that the fighting was related to the April 9 presidential poll and said the elections would be held even if the conflict remained unresolved.

There have been suggestions that the Peruvian leader hoped to distract attention from domestic issues and boost his authority by seizing the disputed territory.

Peru also announced plans Saturday to dispatch a commission of 17 people — historians, lawyers, businessmen, diplomats, politicians and journalists — to counter what they claimed was Ecuador's "disinformation" campaign.

The envoy were to hold meetings with foreign governments to win support for Peru's territorial claims.

Meanwhile, former U.S. President Carter said Saturday he is prepared to mediate in the conflict between Peru and Ecuador if both countries request it.

Hunger, sickness, despair stalk Chechenya cellar children



A Chechen boy stands next to an armed man at a Chechen check point near Samskida (AFP photo)

quick reply.

Rada Ibraghimova, 32, is the mother of three boys aged 15, 10 and eight, and a girl aged 12. They have also been here for two months.

What do the children do with their days? It is a stupid question. "They get sick. What else is there for them to do?"

Ms. Ibraghimova has been a widow for six years. Life had been hard. "But I had an apartment, I had a job, I fed the kids," she said — until the Russians bombed her apartment block on the 15th birthday of her son, Zemlikhan.

"Russia took away their childhood," an old man said.

Ms. Ibraghimova added: "I'm exhausted. I cannot find words. One woman here went crazy and got sick when they started bombing. She died like a dog. She had no funeral."

Feeding the cellar people — the children, the women, the old folk — is becoming more and more difficult.

Despite the shelling, some of them creep back to their homes in above-ground Argun during the day and bring back whatever they

bombed," Ms. Kanayeva said.

Many of the cellar people are ill. Aslan Daudov, 24, is a haemophiliac, who said he cannot get the treatment he needs and lives underground in constant fear for his life. He said there are also cancer sufferers down here.

The children are malnourished and lice-infested. Their faces have scabs. Colds, influenza and fevers are common.

Zaur Muslyayev, the head doctor at the hospital in neighbouring Shali, said that the cold, unheated cellars in Argun and other communities were breeding grounds for influenza and gastrointestinal infections.

But the worst may be yet to come. After mid-March, when the weather turns warmer, cholera could strike the cellar people, he warned.

Mussa Khokiev, commander of a Chechen battalion defending Argun, said on leaving the cellar: "Better to die than to live like that."

Mandela steps into Winnie row

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — President Nelson Mandela went into talks Sunday on the latest crisis involving his estranged wife Winnie, a revolt by the executive of the African National Congress (ANC) Women's League, which she heads, a presidential spokesman said.

Mr. Mandela was meeting the League's leadership at a hotel here to discuss the mass resignation in the past two days of 11 senior members in protest against Winnie's leadership, spokesman Parks Mankahlama said.

Mr. Mandela declined to give details about the talk or about Sunday newspaper reports that Mandela has asked Winnie, who is also deputy minister of arts, culture, science and technology, to withdraw remarks critical of his government or quit.

The Sunday Times said Mr. Mandela instructed Deputy President Thabo Mbeki to hold a meeting with Winnie Friday, in which she was told to retract her criticisms, resign or be fired from the government.

Mr. Mankahlama admitted that Mandela had been unhappy over Winnie's comments and had consulted with Mr. Mbeki, but a public

statement would only be issued later in the week.

Winnie Mandela said the

father of a black police officer slain by white colleagues during a strike by black officers that the government had failed South Africans because it had not addressed racism in the workplace.

She told the crowd at last Sunday's funeral that the ANC's "over-indulgence" in reconciliation was a weakness.

Winnie has yet to respond to the reports.

She failed to attend the Women's League meeting Saturday when 10 senior members, including Health Minister Nkosazana Zuma, resigned, joining veteran anti-apartheid activist Adelaine Tambo, who quit Friday.

The resignations from the influential body were in protest over a tourism venture between Mr. Mandela and actor Omar Sharif.

They cited Mrs. Mandela's "undemocratic behaviour" in going ahead with the scheme despite objections from the Women's League executive.

Mrs. Mandela and Mr. Sharif have launched a company called "The Road To Freedom," which plans to bring tourists, particularly

Bangladesh police battle strikers

DHAKA (Agencies) — More than 100 people were injured when police used rubber bullets and tear gas in battles with striking Bangladeshi workers Sunday, witnesses said.

Nearly 100,000 workers in jute and textile mills privatised over the past two years called the 96-hour strike and a nationwide transport blockade to press demands for higher wages and job security.

The strikers halted trains and inter-city buses across the country, police said. They said some policemen were hurt in sporadic fighting.

The fiercest clashes took place near a mill on the outskirts of Dhaka, where workers barricaded a road, pelted police with stones and attacked vehicles.

Police later charged hundreds of workers marching across a nearby bridge, forcing many to jump into the river below.

"Dozens were forced to dive into the river 70 feet (21 metres) below while others put up a strong fight with police," one witness told Reuters. Some were hurt diving into the water and were taken to hospital, he said.

Government officials said attempts to avert the stoppage failed because of "insincerity and apathy" by some trade union leaders and employers. They gave no details.

Clashes were also reported from the southern district of Chittagong where workers damaged a train and set up many roadblocks, police said.

At Adamjee Nagar near Dhaka, thousands of factory workers overpowered police and took control of a road linking the capital to southeastern districts.

The workers said employers had failed to keep promises to increase salaries and give adequate compensation for job losses due to privatisation.

More than 20,000 jute mill workers lost jobs during privatisation but many of them say they have not yet received promised compensation.

The minimum monthly wage of a industrial labourer recommended by a wage commission — representing the government, private employers and trade unions — is 1,493 taka (\$37.32), fixed in 1991.

But the minimum wage was honoured only in public-

sector mills, said Abul Bashar, leader of the Workers' Action Committee, Sunday.

"Besides demanding the implementation of the higher pay in private factories, we are now asking for a 30 per cent additional rise to meet the soaring cost of living," he said.

Meanwhile, two students were killed and 30 injured Sunday in fence clashes between rival groups who used guns and crude bombs in western Bangladesh's Rajshahi University, student sources said.

The sources said the two were killed when activists from the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) clashed over supremacy on the campus.

University officials or local police could not be reached immediately for confirmation.

News reports earlier said the two sides also clashed Saturday and most students fled the campus.

JCD is the student wing of Bangladesh Nationalist Party and ICS belongs to the Muslim fundamentalist Jamaat-E-Islami Party.

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When signatures don't count

YESTERDAY's five-way meeting in Washington of the foreign ministers of Egypt, Jordan, Israel and the PLO to end the deadlock on the Israeli-Palestinian track was held amid ominous signs that the entire Oslo accord was on the verge of collapse if no serious effort was made to rescue it. The gravity of the situation on the Palestinian front has prompted President Bill Clinton to attend the opening session of the meeting in a renewed bid to breathe new life into the almost defunct Israeli-Palestinian National Authority (PNA) peace talks. But what could be at stake too is the entire peace process, as Osama Baz, President Mubarak's adviser, rightly pointed out on Saturday.

The crux of the problem on the Palestinian-Israeli track transcends the issue of holding the Palestinian elections on time or the so-called redeployment of the Israeli troops in preparation for these polls. It also goes beyond the security concerns of Israel and the wave of violent acts perpetrated by extremists. The central issue here is whether in fact Israel under the leadership of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has the necessary political will to move forward the peace negotiations with the Palestinian side on the matter that counts most: withdrawal from the occupied territories and handing over authority and control to the PNA in due course. This is the bottom line which Rabin is hoping to delay, for as long as he can, out of fear for his political life.

It must be remembered that Palestinian violence and counter Israeli violence have preceded the Oslo accord. So, regrettable as the continuation of this wave of violence indeed is, it cannot be construed as the principal obstacle to progress, although it no doubt has a tremendous negative effect on public opinion on both sides of the fence.

What is also particularly troubling is the notion being advanced by some Israeli officials suggesting that there is a possibility of turning back on the Oslo agreement. Israeli Minister of Health Ephraim Sneh insinuated Saturday on Israel Radio that the Oslo accord is not sacrosanct and could be repudiated by his country at will. When challenged that the non-deployment of the Israeli army on the eve of the Palestinian elections would violate the Oslo accord, Mr. Sneh not only answered in the affirmative but added that contravening the agreement with the Palestinians was necessary, in this particular regard.

Now if the peace agreements that Israel freely negotiated and ratified with the PNA are not sacred, then what is? This shifting stance would suggest that nothing Israel commits itself to can be depended on for all times. Israel has always suggested that Arab signatures cannot be counted on. Now it seems the opposite is true.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IN DEFiance OF THE Palestinians and the whole Arab Nation, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has announced that he was not ready to implement the Oslo agreement, which calls for Israeli forces' pull-out from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, said Al Ra'i, Arabic daily Sunday. With this attitude, said the paper, Mr. Rabin has created a crisis and caused a deadlock in the peace process. The official spokesman of the Palestine National Authority (PNA) has declared openly that Mr. Rabin's government is placing obstacles in the path of peace by refusing to implement its agreements with the Palestinians and by dragging its feet on the question of holding elections and giving the Palestine authority wider powers in the Palestinian territory. It seems that Israel is using the continued Arab resistance against the occupation as an excuse to perpetuate its occupation of Arab land and beef up the Jewish settlements, something which can by no means contribute to the establishment of stability, security and peace in the region, said the paper.

COMMENTING ON THE Arab-Israeli-American meeting in Washington Sunday, a writer in Al Ra'i daily said it was clear that the party was a follow up to the Cairo Arab-Israeli summit. However, the Washington meeting assumes a new dimension since it is being held under the auspices of the United States, which has long considered itself as a full partner in the peace making process, said Mahmud Rimawi. It is also clear that Jordan and Egypt are participating in the meeting for the purpose of pressuring Israel into honouring its commitments towards peace and implementing the Oslo and Cairo agreements, he said. The writer said Washington's bid to achieve peace in the Middle East ought to be translated into facts on the ground because the mere signing of peace treaties and agreements would remain ink on paper unless Israel took steps towards their implementation.

Human Rights File

By Waleed Sa'di

Russia's 'crimes against humanity'

THERE ARE many voices which describe what has occurred in Chechnya at the hands of Russian troops as genocide. The indiscriminate shelling and use of cluster bombs to inflict the maximum number of casualties among the Chechen people have been constantly regarded as tantamount to crimes against humanity and war crimes under the relevant Geneva conventions and the two protocols of the 4th Geneva Convention. What is disturbing is the silence of the "civilised" world and Moscow's interpretation of this silence as a license to go ahead with its war effort to bring the Chechens down to their knees. What is even ominous is the probable interpretation of the combined events in Bosnia and Chechnya by the Islamic peoples as a war against Islam. The most pressing issue here, therefore, is whether the "slaughter" of so many Muslims before the eyes of the champions of democracy and human rights would fuel even more extremism among Muslims everywhere.

There is no denying that the repeated mistreatment of Muslims in Europe and in the Caucasus region would leave a deep imprint on the Islamic national psyche and may end up triggering a belief that Muslims are being targeted by a coalition of advanced states. I personally don't share this conviction but I doubt that the majority of the Islamic

world would share my sense of optimism. The majority would prefer to jump into the conclusion that there is an international conspiracy against Islam. The fact that many international and regional conferences have been held for the specific purpose of gauging the so-called Islamic danger ended up lending support to the fears and anxieties of the Muslim nation that it is being targeted as the number one enemy that replaced the communist threat.

There were many other former republics that were part and parcel of former Soviet Union whose decision to opt out of the U.S.S.R. was indeed conducted in an orderly and humane fashion and was accepted by Moscow. The Baltic states offer a perfect example of how the former Soviet Union was transformed into a freely negotiated alliance of former members of the U.S.S.R. without the resort to force. Why can the Baltic countries or even Ukraine, it is often being asked, be free to go their separate ways and Chechnya be denied the same right?

The only obvious explanation for this differential treatment would readily be construed by fanatics as additional evidence that there is an international consensus to keep the Islamic tide checked. This is what Moscow and the major capitals of the world have refused to take into

consideration in dealing with Bosnia and Chechnya. This geopolitical assessment by the Islamic World of the recent events affecting them could in fact propel further extremism among the Muslims of the international community. Moscow would most probably succeed in subduing Chechnya but such a feat could end up planting the seeds for a wider conflict. The thousands that have lost their lives over the battle for Grozny will surely haunt humanity for many decades, just like the thousands who were killed in the Bosnian conflict.

The near total destruction of Grozny in order to occupy it cannot but have far-reaching implications. This makes the Russian military success a very shallow political, social and cultural victory.

From a human rights perspective, the Russian handling of the situation in Chechnya can only draw fire from many sides on the occasion of the convening of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in Geneva this month. Likewise, Moscow will have to explain its conduct before the Human Rights Committee on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The jurisprudence of the committee on the right of peoples to exercise self-determination is too clear to be ignored by any country how powerful it may be.

Weary of war, but ready for peace?

By Alison Smale

The Associated Press

VIENNA — Almost four years into the bloodshed that ripped apart the old Yugoslavia, combatants and their foreign counsellors stand on the brink of peace — or total war.

In coming weeks, mediators either will be able to build on brittle truces in Bosnia and Croatia, or watch war engulf both simultaneously for the first time since fighting started between Serbs and Croats in spring 1991.

War in both states would produce a military and political tangle more complex than the conflicts that so far have defied solution.

It almost certainly would mean withdrawal of tens of thousands of U.N. peacekeepers in a hazardous operation backed by U.S. and other NATO troops. It also could mean conflict spreading to other parts of the volatile Balkans.

Considerers — especially the United States — are pressuring local leaders in a scramble to avoid such a nightmare. In both Bosnia and Croatia, Washington is signalling that there can be no final settlement without the support of the Serb minorities.

This has angered Bosnia's Muslim-led government. Yet Washington is simultaneously trying to shore up the government's troubled federation with Bosnia's Croats to make sure the Serbs don't get, or take, too much.

In Croatia, Washington is a key player in foreign

efforts to prevent a new Serb-Croat war if President Franjo Tudjman insists that 12,000 U.N. peacekeepers leave when their mandate ends on March 31.

Local leaders also are putting out feelers for peace — approaches that France wants to explore at a European conference attended by leaders of Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia.

But almost four years of fighting create their own logic.

The aggressive nationalism of Mr. Tudjman and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic launched the war.

Bosnia's Muslims, the biggest losers, put no faith in outside powers to regain land for them. They have some trust in their army, now better equipped and trained than at the outset of Bosnia's war in 1992.

They stoked deep fears and pressured Serbs and Croats that ties of blood counted for more than decades of coexistence.

Many people who have lost homes, loved ones and livelihoods in the name of nationalism are weary of war, but see little incentive in peace.

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Travellers to central Bosnia report preparations for

more war when a four-month truce runs out May 1.

In Croatia, the U.N.-patrolled ceasefire that ended six months of Serb-Croat war in January 1992 still holds.

But Mr. Tudjman insists the United Nations get out, because it has frozen Serb domination of one-third of Croatia while doing nothing to disarm the Serbs or return Croat refugees to their homes.

On Friday, Mr. Tudjman again sought to reassure the world and his own people. "There will be no war, but

Sarajevo.

In contrast to his fighting rhetoric of 1991, Mr. Tudjman does not sound like a man preparing for war. Instead, he and his close aides suggest they hope for recognition from Mr. Milosevic.

The Serbian president, characteristically, is silent. Mr. Milosevic clearly is not anxious to help either the Croatian or Bosnian Serbs whom he incited and bankrolled into war. He now would like to end international sanctions imposed for fomenting that war.

A Milosevic-Tudjman deal is widely rumoured.

Diplomats might coax Mr. Tudjman into extending the U.N. mandate, or accepting some different international presence. Mr. Milosevic would recognize Croatia.

The world would lift sanctions on Serbia, and persuade Mr. Tudjman and the Croatian Serbs to accept an international plan whereby the Serbs handed back some territory to, hated Zagreb, in exchange for autonomy — not independence — for the rest.

Even if outsiders could pull off such a diplomatic coup, Bosnia would remain at war. Any Milosevic-Tudjman deal would revive the Muslim-led government's fears that the Croats and Serbs, with the world's connivance, simply will divide Bosnia between them.

Already in Bihać, Bosnia's northwestern tip, Serbs from Bosnia and Croatia are making common cause. Those battles have defied hopeful signs such as the opening of roads in and out of besieged

there might be isolated incidents," he said.

Croatia's Serbs, however, already have cut off all tenuous economic and other ties painstakingly negotiated with Mr. Tudjman in the past few months. They will fight if attacked, and have a promise of support from the Serbs in neighbouring Bosnia.

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however, that Mr. Mandela, who repudiated his heritage as a clan chief became one of South Africa's first black lawyers, can be unimaginably stubborn and is formidable when crossed.

"He is a very difficult fellow to deal with when he is irritated and when he has made up his mind it is very difficult to change," said a member of his staff.

Mr. Mandela showed the steely side of his nature recently when he rebuked black civil servants growing impatient with the pace of change from white domination.

"My patience is not unlimited and I am losing patience," he told reporters at the end of the day.

Friends say Mr. Mandela has continued his prison routine since his release from a mainland jail near Cape Town on Feb. 11, 1990, rising at 4:30 every morning for an hour-long walk in his garden or through the suburban streets around his Johannesburg home. He was moved from Robben Island in 1982.

Discounting regular market rumours that he is suffering a terminal illness, Mr. Mandela said that although Mr. Mandela was increasingly stiff at the knees and watery-eyed, his health remained good.

"He is in his nature to reach out to everyone, even the most junior member of staff, with a gesture of encouragement."

Political colleagues add,

reference to Mr. Mandela's leaky rebarrels, damaged by years of work in a Robben Island lime quarry.

"He can read without glasses, but bright lights make his pupils close up tight and that is painful," he said.

Mr. Mandela has caused market ripples several times when his two military doctors have suddenly ordered him to cut his intense schedule.

One of his doctors travels with him when he is away from home and often joins him on his morning walks, but officials insist Mr. Mandela's ailments are only those of age.

Mr. Mandela seldom refers in public to the hardships of his life, which, apart from imprisonment, have included the death in a car accident of an adult son, the collapse of two marriages and a bout with tuberculosis.

Friends say he still grieves for the failure of his marriage to Winnie, now a deputy minister in his cabinet and, as a revered leader of the leftist fringe of his party, a potential rival for power.

They say his closest friend and confidant is former cellmate Ahmed Kathrada and his main political adviser is Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, the son of former prison colleague Govan Mbeki, and the man favoured to succeed him.

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Revolutions that failed

By G. H. Jansen

THE IRANIANS issued a rather grandiloquent invitation when, earlier this month, people were requested to "celebrate the 16th anniversary of the victorious Iranian Revolution."

The Serbian president, characteristically, is silent. Mr. Milosevic clearly is not anxious to help either the Croatian or Bosnian Serbs whom he incited and bankrolled into war. He now would like to end international sanctions imposed for fomenting that war.

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As it marks the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, Europe can afford no such self-congratulation. It must brace for more war in its midst.

Thus, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, perhaps because he had spent his adult life in the cloistered isolation of theological seminaries in Qom and Najaf in Iraq, was convinced that Iranians were far better, more sincere and more dedicated Muslims than they actually were. Which is not to say that the average Iranian Muslim is not, generally speaking, a devout Muslim. The Iranians are a devout people, devout enough to die for the faith as was seen during the Shah's attempted violent repression of the "revolution" in the months preceding its victory when the Ayatollah returned in triumph from exile in France.

However, the revolution then decreed and still decrees no drinking or smoking, which could be found in any reformist movement. But it also decreed no secular music, no poetry and only "improving" films and literature. Plus, of course, women are covered-up from forehead to ankle.

The failure of the communist ideal was due to a similar, but slightly different, misreading of human nature: Not that ordinary people were not as ascetic as the founding fathers believed but that the average man was not as selfish and honest as the communist ideal demands.

The failure of communism as a creed and as practice was a noble failure, because it was a failure of the hope of "one for all and all for one," which was the basic belief underlying communism, however much overtaken with dreary dialectic.

Communist economic theory failed to provide an answer to the problem of incentives: Why should a person work

News

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fighting raging in south Iraq — opposition

NICOSIA (AFP) — Fierce battles have erupted in southern Iraq between the army and opposition forces, the Iraqi opposition said Sunday. "Fierce battles have been raging in the Ournah region," at the intersection of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, 400 kilometres southeast of Baghdad, the Iraqi National Congress opposition coalition said. It said the fighting began before dawn on Saturday, but gave no reports of any casualties. "The 4th army corps forces have retreated because of the attacks" by rebels, it added in a statement received in Cyprus. Ournah is located in Iraq's southern marshlands, where Muslim Shi'ite opposition groups have been hiding out since an abortive uprising against Saddam and his army in March 1991, a month after the Gulf war. The Iraqi air force cannot fly over southern Iraq as U.S., British and French warplanes have been enforcing an air exclusion zone over this area since 1992.

Egypt militants kill policeman

ASSIUT (R) — Suspected Islamist gunmen killed a policeman in southern Egypt, police said on Sunday. They said Ali Rushdi Abdul Sattar was gunned down in the village of Adwa in Minya province, 260 kilometres south of Cairo, as he walked in a street on Saturday night. Further north, security sources said a suspected militant threw an explosive device at a police officer's resthouse in Beni Suef province on Sunday. The militant escaped and one was hurt in the attack on Major Mamduh Abdul Ghani's residence in the town of El-Hanshiya, some 110 kilometres south of Cairo. Police in the area deny the attack took place. Security sources believe the attackers in both incidents belong to the militant Al Gamma Al Islamiyah (Islamic Group), whose guerrillas are fighting to overthrow Egypt's government and establish a strict Islamic state. More than 650 people, mainly police and militants, have been killed in political violence in Egypt since 1992.

Al Gore to visit Egypt in March

CAIRO (R) — U.S. Vice-President Al Gore will visit Egypt in March for talks with President Hosni Mubarak on bilateral cooperation, the official Al Ahram newspaper said on Sunday. Mr. Gore's visit will precede one by Mr. Mubarak to Washington in the spring during which the Egyptian president will try to warm relations with the United States, soured over Cairo's refusal to sign an extension of nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty when it comes up in April unless Israel signs. Ties between Egypt and the U.S., which gives Mubarak's government over \$2 billion a year, have also been strained by U.S. newspaper reports claiming corruption in Egypt and criticising Cairo's close ties with Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi and alleged human rights abuses against Muslim militants.

Playwright quits union to protest Adonis ban

BEIRUT (AFP) — Syrian playwright Saadallah Wannous has quit his country's writers union in protest at its ban on leading Arab author Adonis for favouring normalisation with Israel. "I am stepping from the writers union without regret to protest the exclusion of Adonis," Mr. Wannous said in a telegram to the union, published here Sunday. The work of Mr. Wannous, considered as one of the leading Arab playwrights, is fiercely anti-Israel. His best-known work "The Rape" condemns the Israeli occupation of Arab land. Adonis, whose real name is Ali Ahmad Said, was banned from the union last month for having taken part in a 1993 forum of intellectuals also attended by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. Adonis, a Lebanese of Syrian origin who now lives in Paris, has refused to comment on his exclusion.

Drug suspects wanted by U.S. escape from jail

PESHAWAR (AFP) — Three men wanted in the United States on drug smuggling charges have escaped from a jail here with the help of forged documents, official sources said Sunday. The fugitives include two Afghans and a Pakistani tribesman. Their escape from the Peshawar jail in November went unnoticed until U.S. authorities recently demanded their extradition, the sources said. The details of the charges pending against them in the U.S. and the offences for which they were jailed here were not immediately available. Peshawar Jail Superintendent Mohammad Rafiq Khan confirmed that three prisoners had escaped and said three prison officials had been suspended in connection with the incident.

Up roar against Kuwait bill to regulate press

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwaiti newspapers on Sunday protested a government move to ban public officials from working as journalists. Around 90 per cent of editorial staff on Kuwaiti newspapers also work as public officials. In their editorials newspapers attacked the bill drafted by Information Minister Sheikh Saud Nasser Al Sabah to stiffen an existing law which has so far been ignored. Hundreds of journalists also organised a sit-in at their association headquarters in Kuwait City on Saturday to protest the bill. In a statement the Kuwaiti Journalists' Association accused the government of trying to "empty" newspapers of Kuwaiti journalists which is unacceptable. Before the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis many journalists working in Kuwait were Palestinians. Since 1991, however, 350,000 Palestinians have left the emirate.

Chadian minister visits Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Chadian Foreign Minister Ahmad Abdul Rahman Haggag has called for boosting ties with Iran during an official visit here, the official Iranian news agency IRNA said Sunday. Mr. Haggag arrived here Thursday and took part in ceremonies marking the 16th anniversary of the Islamic revolution on Feb. 11, 1979, it said. In a meeting with his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati, the Chadian minister called for boosting cooperation with Iran in the fields of education, agriculture, oil and industry. Chad has recently discovered crude reserves of between 300 to 400 million barrels in the southern regions of the country, according to official figures. N'Djamena signed an accord with a Western consortium in early February to build a pipeline from the field. Iran said last year that it was asked to help Chad develop its oil resources, a claim denied by N'Djamena. The Chadian minister also met with President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on Sunday and urged Iran to help in his country's development programmes, according to Tehran Radio. The visit comes in response to a brief stop over in N'Djamena by Mr. Velayati last March while on a tour of several African nations.

Cairo censors story on human rights abuses

CAIRO (AP) — An American human rights organisation has criticised the Egyptian government for censoring a story related to human rights abuses in a weekly English-language newspaper. The Human Rights Watch-Middle East said in a statement that it was "a blatant violation of freedom of expression" to ban a story about the arrest of the widow of a lawyer who died in mysterious circumstances in government custody. Andrew Hammond, a spokesman for the Middle East Times, said Sunday that the government censor ordered a news story removed from the Feb. 12-18 edition about Wafa Al Bakri, the 21-year-old widow of Abdul Harith Medani. The government censor who handled the case was not immediately available for comment, and another official in the censor's office refused to answer questions.

Crown Prince hosts iftar

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Sunday hosted an iftar in honour of ambassadors of Arab and Islamic countries in Jordan, the president and members of Al al Bayt Foundation, members of the Royal Commission on Al al Bayt University, the board of trustees of the Arab Thought Forum, presidents of Jordanian universities and the Higher Ifta Council. The iftar was attended by His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad, the King's cultural secretary, Deputy Prime Minister and Information Minister Khaled Al Karaki, the chief Islamic Justice, the minister of youth, the Crown Prince's advisors and senior Royal Court officials.



Talibans close in on Kabul

KABUL (AFP) — The forces of Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani are strengthening their defences on the western front lines to ward off any threat from advancing Taliban troops near Kabul, locals said Sunday.

A defence ministry spokesman confirmed the defences were being reinforced, but did not link it to the rapid advance of the Taliban, who have said they want to capture the capital.

The spokesman said efforts had been made to communicate with the Taliban and that the two sides were "soon" to meet.

The Taliban, who have rapidly grown into a well-armed force of an estimated 25,000 from a mere 800 when they surfaced six months ago, last week captured Maidan Shahar, 30 kilometres south of Kabul, the Taliban spokesman said.

With last week's fall of Maidan Shahar, the Hekmatyar stronghold is badly exposed to Taliban raids, diplomats and experts said.

Taliban leaders are due to meet in Kandahar, the old royal capital, they took six months ago to decide their next move.

The radicals have said their aim is to take Kabul and rid Afghanistan of the rival mujahideen, whom they describe as "criminals."

A Taliban spokesman said the Shoura, or general assembly, which is led by Islamic scholars, has badly shaken Afghanistan's traditional mujahideen groups over the past six months.

Afghan sources in Pakistan said Sunday that most of Logar province south of Kabul fell to the Taliban the previous day.

The Hezb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, which

has been fighting Mr. Rabbani's forces, denied it had lost Logar, but conceded the capture of Maidan Shahar although it claimed its forces had deliberately withdrawn from the city to let the Taliban enter Kabul.

Logar became the ninth of Afghanistan's 30 provinces to fall to the radical Taliban. A Taliban spokesman said there was little resistance.

The provincial governor, Ihsanullah, allied to Mr. Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami, fled to Charasay, the fundamentalists' headquarters 25 kilometres south of Kabul, the Taliban spokesman said.

With last week's fall of Maidan Shahar, the Hekmatyar stronghold is badly exposed to Taliban raids, diplomats and experts said.

The Taliban advance has been rapid, from a mere 800 when they surfaced six months ago, to last week's capture of Maidan Shahar, 30 kilometres south of Kabul, the Taliban spokesman said.

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The Hezb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, which

had one clear effect — the value of the afghan in Kabul has improved.

Iran bans hardline newspaper

TEHRAN (Agencies) — Iranian authorities banned a radical newspaper after it published charges by a hardliner that the country's leaders had failed to export Iran's Islamic revolution, a board member said on Sunday.

A ceasefire in the civil war, mainly between Mr. Hekmatyar's and Mr. Rabbani's groups, that has cost more than 20,000 lives since the fall of the communist government in April 1992 would follow the handover.

The Taliban say they are not opposed to the U.N. peace efforts but say they will not sit with the mujahideen, whom they consider "criminals."

The new radicals, trained at Pakistani Islamic schools, have three major advantages, analysts say. Their army of an estimated 25,000 men has a formidable weaponry, including 200 tanks and a dozen fighter jets.

Diplomats say it is backed by Pakistan — which is denied in Islamabad — and may get Saudi Arabian funds. But all experts agree they get enormous goodwill from weary citizens.

Diplomats in Pakistan said,

meanwhile, that Iran was incensed over the Taliban's rise, seeing American involvement in the phenomenon.

The Taliban advance has

had one clear effect — the value of the afghan in Kabul has improved.

The two also went out for coffee that night, said hotel manager Musawar Qazi.

The next morning, Pakistani and U.S. law enforcement officials burst into the hotel and asked the front desk worker, "Where is room 16?" the clerk pointed to the second floor and the officials rushed upstairs where they found Mr. Yousef, tied him up, blindfolded him and took him away, Mr. Qazi said.

Shortly afterward, six U.S. and Pakistani officials walked across the street, went directly to Mr. Parker's apartment and entered without resorting to force, said Mr. Ghauri.

Mr. Yousef may have been done in by his own ego as a legendary international fugitive, a chief agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) says.

"It's almost like he became impressed with himself, became a legend in his own mind," said James Fox, who headed the FBI office in New York, where the bomb exploded in 1993.

It is the only sensible explanation for such risky behaviour," he said. Mr. Yousef reportedly flew first class from city to city, visiting girlfriends and working on fresh schemes.

Mr. Yousef, who was the FBI's most sought after fugitive, was caught in Pakistan, after he had arrived on a flight from Thailand.

The News reported Friday that Mr. Parker had been arrested by Pakistani police.

But police and government officials told the Associated Press that they knew nothing about Mr. Parker.

Mr. Parker knew Yousef and we immediately thought that he was the one who gave the tip," Salman Ghauri, who runs a video shop just below Mr. Parker's apartment, said Saturday. Mr. Parker, who "in his mid-20s, often rented movies from the store.

South African officials knew Mr. Parker well and said he sometimes was short of money. Last year, he asked a South African diplomat for a loan so he and his wife could fly home to Cape Town. He promptly repaid the money when he returned.

In a related development, Pakistan has asked the United States for a share of the reward money for Mr. Yousef's capture, the News

reported.

"Without our help, (Yousef) could not have been apprehended," Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar told the newspaper.

Mr. Yousef, an Iraqi, is

alleged to be the mastermind of the Feb. 26, 1995, World Trade Centre bombing in New York that left six dead and some 1,000 injured. He pleaded innocent Thursday and is scheduled to make another court appearance this week.

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fugitive, was caught in

Pakistan, after he had

arrived on a flight from

Thailand.

"He had to know we had

his description, associations

and habits entered into every

computer database with

every law enforcement agency

in the world," said Mr. Fox, who retired last year after three decades with the FBI.

"It would be just crazy for

him to travel around. Maybe

he's like so many people that

get a little taste of the spot-

light," Mr. Fox said. "He did

not behave very smartly."

If Mr. Yousef had hidden

in some small village in Iraq,

he probably could have

escaped detection forever,"

Mr. Fox said.

U.S. officials say Mr.

Yousef, born in Kuwait, is

now a Pakistani citizen with

Iraqi travel documents.

King: Jordan will set model

(Continued from page 1)

United States and elsewhere

of those who threaten that

peace and I think particularly

of terrorist organisations

which caused so much grief

even in my own city of New

York... and in Tel Aviv and

Algiers for that matter," Mr.

Rifkind said.

"Therefore, we launched a

vigorous campaign to encour-

age the civilised countries of

the world to join together, to

resist all the forces of terror-

ism and the countries that are

hostile to such terrorism," he

said.

"We hope to do everything

we can... to help the develop-

ment of peace in this area."

In an interview with the

Business & Finance

U.S.
capital city
in dire
financial
straits

Business
Daily
Beat

A review
of economic news
from the Arabic press

WASHINGTON (R) —
capital of the country
is facing the most
financial crisis in a cent-
ral city. Mayor
Barry has revealed
that showing that Wash-
ington's budget deficit
is worse than earlier
takings, the city will
spend revenues by \$72
million in this current fiscal
ending on Sept. 30.

Already among the 1
city with the highest
rates, the budget deficit
is set to destroy
reducing funds to zero.
The newly-installed
said he was planning to
Congress to slash 4
city workers and give
school spending a
avoids federal intervention
running the city.

The city is a federal
city with limited
powers. Congress still
sees its budget and can
take action.

Washington's 800
citizens, mostly black,
young members of
U.S. Congress, only 10
representatives of the
Senate and House of
Representatives.

The deficit is over \$3
billion of the city's budget of \$3.2 billion.

** The Jordanian and Egyptian authorities have reached a preliminary agreement to lower Suez Canal fees on goods destined to Aqaba by between 30 to 50 per cent. Such a step would increase the competitive edge of the Aqaba port, among other ports in the area, especially for transport to and from Europe (Al Aswag).

** Jordanian and Egyptian authorities have agreed to expand the role of the Arab Maritime Bridge Company to include tourism transport and cargo transport. The company is expected to put its first class tourist vessel into service at the beginning of April to take tourists between the ports of Aqaba-Nuweibeh-Sharm Al Sheikh (Al Aswag).

** The first batch of a new price list for imported drugs was released by the Ministry of Health and the second is expected within a couple of days. According to the list, the average price decline was nine per cent. Drugs that are most likely to cost more are those of Swiss, German and, probably British origin, while prices of Italian and Greek drugs will decline. The Ministry of Health reviews prices of imported drugs whenever changes occur in the exchange rate of foreign currencies against the dinar (Al Aswag).

** An economist estimated the volume of losses as a result of price falls at the Amman Financial Market since February 1994 at JD 321 million. The figure translates into JD 68,360 per individual. A broker at the stock exchange estimates the number of investors in shares and stocks at 880,000 persons (Al Aswag).

** Royal Jordanian sold its stake of 90,000 shares in Jordan Express Tourist Transport Co. to the Cairo Amman Bank. The price was JD 50 per share (Al Aswag).

** The general assembly of the Jordan Gulf Real Estate Investment Company has agreed to merge with Petra Enterprises and Equipment Leasing Company. The new company will have a JD 5 million capital, JD 4.5 million of which will be that of Jordan Gulf and JD 0.5 million of Petra Enterprises. The new company will focus on developing key land plots, building comprehensive and developed housing complexes and entering in the tourism and hotel business (Al Aswag).

** The Ministry of Water and Irrigation has a comprehensive plan to modernise the national water network at a cost of JD 55.6 million. Water lost in the network in Greater Amman exceeds 53 per cent and the plan aims to reduce this to ten per cent. The plan, which is to be implemented in stages soon, will first include Jabal Amman, Jabal Luweibdeh, Jabal Al Hussein, Al Jofeh, Al Hashemi Al Shamali, Al Ashrafiyah, Marka, downtown Amman and Wadi Al Haddad as well as the cities of Irbid, Zarqa, Mafraq and Ramtha. The second stage of the plan involves modernising deplated water networks in other areas of Greater Amman (Al Aswag).

** The Arab Union International Insurance Company posted a net profit of JD 192,608 net during its 1993/1994 financial year, 47 per cent lower than the previous year. The company attributed the lower profit to the JD 101,754 loss in the vehicle insurance department as premiums remained unchanged despite rising costs for car repair and spare parts. Despite the decline in profit the company is distributing JD 112,000 in dividends at 14 per cent (Al Aswag).

Diet changes in Asia keep threat of shortage at bay

HONG KONG (AFP) —
Changing diet in several
Asian countries keeping at
bay a possible shortage of
rice, the region's staple,
despite the pressure of growing
population, natural calamities
and diminishing farmlands.

To stave off shortages,
Asian governments are monitoring
stockpiles in the region, which accounts for 90
per cent of the 500 million
tonnes of rice produced in the
world annually, analysts told
AFP.

Asian history is replete

with instances of governments
being toppled as a result
of rice shortages, they said.

Mahabub Hossain, an economist at the Philippines-based International Rice Research Institute, said per capita rice consumption has decreased in high- and middle-income countries such as Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia.

"This is because people in
these countries have reached
income levels that allow them to
eat out more in fast food
joints and restaurants as well

as afford meat, fish, vegetables
and bread," he said.

But he warned against
complacency, noting that the
majority of countries, including
China, India, Indonesia and
Bangladesh, were still
heavily dependent on rice.

adding: "Rice is a luxury for
the poor."

Figures showed that 70 per
cent of the more than three
billion people in Asia subsist
either or partially on rice.

Lee Tseng-Chung, an official
of the Taiwan council of
agriculture, said the Taiwanese
were eating less rice due to a greater diversity
of food choices.

"It is a common trend,
people tend to consume less
rice as they get richer," said
John Leung, the Hong
Kong's government principal
trade officer.

Consumption of rice in
Hong Kong declined 14 per
cent to 327,000 kilogrammes
last year compared with the
previous year, and per capita

consumption has fallen
sharply from 120 kilogrammes
in 1961 to 56 kilogrammes
last year, Mr. Leung said.

"There is a trend towards
the mushrooming of fast-food
and western-food outlets,"

said Retno Widiasuti, a researcher
at the Foundation of Indonesian
Consumers.

These changes were "im-
portant" because a majority
of these fast-food outlets' clients
were young, he said.

Only four per cent of the
world's current total rice output
is traded between nations.

But under new World
Trade Organisation agricultural
measures, nations such as Thailand and Japan
are being forced to open up
their rice markets.

Nevertheless, rice production
has declined in several
countries including China,
Taiwan and Indonesia.

China, according to a recent
World Population Re-

JORDAN TIMES, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1995 9

Foreign
investors
blow
heat
in AFM

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Buying by foreign
investors coupled with positive political developments in the region last week gave a boost to trading and prices in the Amman Financial Market (AFM) this week after three weeks of stagnation, brokers said Sunday.

The main market indicator, the official AFM general price index, closed on Sunday at 142.24, up 0.47 points, or 0.31 points. On Saturday, the index gained 1.1 points or 0.79 per cent to close at 141.79 points over the week's opening of 140.68 points.

Volume of trading was around JD 915,000 on Saturday.

The over one per cent gain in prices in two days was attributed to several factors by brokers. They said the decline in prices in the last three weeks appeared to have prompted foreign investors to buy and this interest was immediately translated into the increase in prices.

The increases were brought about by investors who anticipated foreign capital interest in some of the stock and rushed to acquire them, brokers said.

But, said a broker, "the foreign buyers are very picky and choosy. They are focusing on blue chip shares and it is unlikely that they would turn to others in the short term."

However, the very entry of foreign capital, regardless of its volume, was taken by local investors as a positive sign, the broker added.

Investors have been complaining in private that foreign investors, who have secured government approval to enter the market, were not coming in as they expected earlier and this had led to a dampening of an initial enthusiasm which drove up prices early last year.

"It is largely unrealistic to expect foreign investors to pump in millions of dollars into the Jordanian market and somehow allow local investors to make money," said a market analyst. "One has to remember that a foreign investor is looking at involvement in markets all over the world and would only get into a market when he is sure of reaping better returns than any other options."

Morocco
to export
oil shale
to Israel
power plant

RABAT (R) — Morocco will export a consignment of bituminous shale to Israel in an experiment to produce cheap electricity, a Moroccan weekly reported Friday.

The deal the to be concluded since Morocco became the second Arab country after Egypt to establish official ties with Israel.

The economic weekly La Vie Economique said the accord was signed between the state utility office National d'Electricite and Israel's state-owned company PAMA.

The project involves the export of 300-400 tonnes of shale — rock from which oil can be extracted — from three sites in Morocco to a pilot plant in Israel. The newspaper did not say how much the Israelis would pay for the shale.

If Israel finds it can produce electricity cheaply enough from the shale, it will start a large-scale project and import larger quantities of it from Morocco.

Morocco has shale deposits estimated at around 120 million tonnes, of which 80 million tonnes are found in Tarfaya on the Atlantic coast.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET		FOR SUNDAY		12/02/1995	
ORGANIZED MARKET SWING PRICE LIST		FOR SUNDAY		12/02/1995	
COMPANY'S NAME		SC. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE OF TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK.		1564	6924	4.140	4.220
THE HODGSON BANK		1552	5264	4.420	4.420
JORDAN KUWAIT BANK		708	2112	3.990	3.000
JORDAN GULF BANK		10782	16892	1.435	1.460
JORDAN AGRICULTURE BANK		64	204	3.700	3.700
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK		31388	39892	4.170	4.060
ARMON BANK FOR INVESTMENT		678	2511	4.000	4.000
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN		4321	6225	1.430	1.450
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK.		57553	114492	INDEX NUMBER : 156.27 CHANGE : +0.181	INDEX NUMBER : 156.27 CHANGE : +0.181
BANKS S SECTOR					
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE		202	478	2.350	2.390
INSURANCE S SECTOR					
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER /NEW MIDDLE EASTERN HOTELS		3852	4979	1.490	1.520
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES		44565	55124	1.410	1.450
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER		503	582	0.970	0.970
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS		603	1428	2.350	2.380
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION		2222	6155	3.700	3.680
SERVICES S SECTOR					
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES		59	1947	32.780	33.000
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES		8299	24957	2.960	2.990
THE ARAB POTASH/NEW		150	750	5.000	5.000
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY		138	5584	9.500	9.450
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL		140	3140	3.700	3.700
THE JORDAN WORSTED MILLS		222	15202	7.550	7.600
RAFIA INDUSTRIES		13226	58489	4.370	4.470
RAFIA PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING		2550	7139	2.770	2.800
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES		1750	52114	8.000	8.020
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL INDUSTRIES		3660	8423	0.930	0.970
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MANUFACTURERS/JINCO		105	152	7.70	7.70
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS		1202	1720	1.750	1.720
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS		555	1693	2.600	2.600
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES		2550	10406	4.010	4.120
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.		6000	16227	1.980	2.060
INDUSTRIAL S SECTOR					
		86448	252508	INDEX NUMBER : 134.07 CHANGE : +0.401	INDEX NUMBER : 134.07 CHANGE : +0.401
GRAND TOTAL					
		234401	586771	INDEX NUMBER : 142.24 CHANGE : +0.312	INDEX NUMBER : 142.24 CHANGE : +0.312
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET				162210	
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET				266933	

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NBA All-Star weekend

Miner wins slam-dunk contest; Rice takes 3-point shootout

PHOENIX (AP) — Harold Miner cut toward the basket from the left side, spun 180 degrees, lowered the ball to his knees and slammed it backward through the basket.

Miner calls it his "double-pump reverse" jam, a move he's been using since his teens, and it led the Miami Heat guard to his second NBA slam-dunk title in three years Saturday night.

"I bring it way down, as far as I can bring it, and throw it behind my ears," Miner said. "That's one that I've kind of depended on in dunk contests in the past."

Miner started off his final-round routine with that dunk. His second was a flying left-handed jam, and he completed his set with a 360-degree spin and slam.

In the first round, he slammed in one shot with his left hand on the rebound of a ball off the backboard. On another-round dunk that brought the crowd to its feet, he cupped the ball with his left wrist and whirled in the air before jamming it in.

Rap music and on-court commentary by actor-singer Sinbad provided the background for a competition that — with the exception of Miner's dunks and two by defending champion Isiah Rider — failed to excite the fans or the rows of NBA peers watching the dunkers.

There was little of the artistry that Michael Jordan and Dominique Wilkins provided in the competition's early years. This time, it was all about power.

"I tried to throw them down hard, that's what I try to do on all my dunks," said the 1.96 metres Miner. "Judges like to see power from someone my size."

The judges were all former NBA stars — Julius Erving, George Gervin, Connie Hawkins, Lou Hudson and Maurice Lucas.

Miner scored 49.2 of a possible 50 points in the first round and had 46 points in the final against Rider of the Minnesota Timberwolves and Utah Jazz rookie Jamie Watson.

Miner hit three of his four dunks in the finals, while Rider hit two of four and Watson made just one of four. That meant the top three NBA dunkers hit just 50 per cent of their jams.

Tony Dumas of Dallas, Antonio Harvey of the Los Angeles Lakers and Tim Perry of Philadelphia were eliminated in the first round.

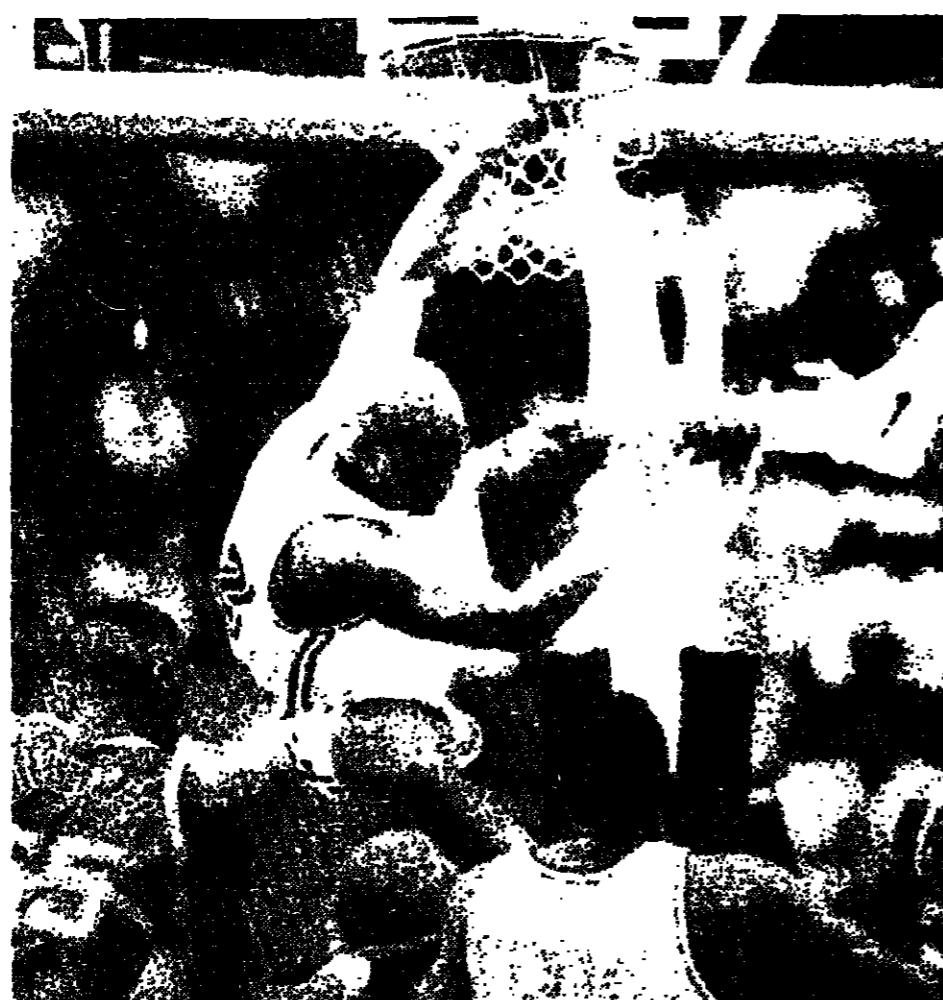
Miner won the slam-dunk competition as a rookie in 1993, but was unable to defend his title last year because of injury.

Rice wins 3-point shootout

Glen Rice was a surprise winner of a shorter, but not necessarily better, long-distance shootout.

Rice, a seventh-place finisher in his only previous appearance in the shootout, because the NBA's 3-point shooting champion Saturday night.

He outscored favourite Reggie Miller 17-16 in the final round, matching the third-lowest final-round total in the event's 10-year history. The eight competitors took 25 shots in each round from the 3-point distance of 6.7 metres. 53 cms less than in



Harold Miner, the NBA's slam-dunk champion in one of his acrobatic moves

previous years.

Mark Price, who won the event the last two all-star weekends, missed this year's shootout because of a broken wrist. He scored 24 points in the finals a year ago from the longer distance.

Previously, the winner of the final round scored 16 points on two occasions — Larry Bird in 1987 and Craig Hodges in 1992.

Both Bird and Hodges won the event three times, with Bird scored 22 points in the 1986 finals and Hodges a record 25 in the first round that same year. No one scored more than 19 in any round this year.

Both Miller, who dazzled NBA fans with his 3-point shooting in last year's playoffs with Indiana Pacers and last summer's world championships for the United States, and Rice scored 19 points in the semifinals.

Rice, who has made 43.9 per cent of his 3-pointers this season, was the last of four qualifiers after the first round. He scored 14 points, while Scott Burrell had 19, Miller 17, and Chuck Person 15.

Rice made his only other appearance in the long-distance shootout in 1991, dropping out after one round with nine points.

Eastern Conference led by new group of young stars

There's a changing of the NBA All-Star guard in the Eastern Conference.

Perennial All-Stars such as Michael Jordan and Isiah Thomas have retired. Dominique Wilkins didn't make the team and Mark Price is injured. With that group gone, the National Basketball Association All-Star game belongs to a crop of new players — Shaquille O'Neal, Anfernee Hardaway and Grant Hill.

Five first-time All-Stars will play for the Eastern Conference.

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United thrash City rivals to go back on top

LONDON (AP) — Reigning champions Manchester United scored three times in twenty minutes against their old rivals Manchester City to return to the top of the Premiership for the first time in ten weeks at Maine Road Saturday.

Goals from Paul Ince, Andrei Kanchelskis and Andy Cole — his second in as many games — condemned City to yet another derby humiliation following their 5-0 defeat at Old Trafford last November.

But their supremacy may be short-lived as second placed Blackburn play their game-in-hand against Sheffield Wednesday at Ewood Park on Sunday.

Manchester United's victory was slightly marred by some skirmishes among rival fans.

Although the clashes were nothing like the scenes witnessed after Chelsea's game against Millwall earlier in the week, Saturday's brawling will add to the worries of the English football authorities.

United's second-half display brought back memories of their two championship-winning seasons and showed Blackburn they are determined to make it three titles in a row and clinch a European Cup spot for next season.

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson threw down the gauntlet to Blackburn after seeing his side regaining the Premiership leadership, saying: "We are set-

ting ourselves a target."

"We want to reach our capabilities. If we do that we will know that we'll win plenty of games."

"It was an excellent result. I was pleased with our second-half performance. We were outstanding and our football was excellent. You have to give City credit for having a go at us and for turning it into a bit of a cup-tie," he added.

Andy Cole, United record seven million pounds striker, created United's first goal 12 minutes after the break when he passed the ball to Ince who scored his third goal of the season.

Kanchelskis, whose hat-trick had destroyed City last November, settled for just one goal this time — scoring the second after 74 minutes.

Colle made it two goals in two games three minutes later to round off a good all-round performance.

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Swimming world records tumble

SHEFFIELD (R) — American Jeff Rouse and Angela Kennedy of Australia kept the world records tumbling at the two-day Sheffield World Cup meeting Sunday.

In the heats on the closing day, Rouse clocked 24.37 seconds to set a men's 50 metres backstroke short-course record — beating the mark of 24.60 set by Frenchman Franck Schott in Paris at last year's final World Cup meeting on March 27.

Kennedy reclaimed the women's 50 metres butterfly record, in her heats with a storming swim of 26.56 seconds — just 11 days after losing it to American Amy Van Dyken.

Van Dyken had clocked 26.73 in Espoo, Finland, lowering Kennedy's previous mark of 26.93.

The Sunday double hoisted the weekend world record tally at the Ponds Forge Pool to four, after Danyon Loader of New Zealand and Britain's Mark Foster set new standards in the 400 metres freestyle and 50 metres butterfly respectively on Saturday.

The performances earned \$1,500 World Cup world record bonuses, plus shares in a separate award from the Sheffield organisers.

With the closing sessions of finals in the 25-metre pool still to come, Rouse, Kennedy, Loader and Foster were each in line for a quarter of the 10,000 pounds sterling (\$15,000) on offer for setting world records.

Makinen poised to win Swedish Rally

KARLSTAD, Sweden (R) — Finland's Tommi Makinen looks set to win the Swedish Rally after heavy snow dramatically altered the leaderboard on the World Championship second-round event Sunday.

Makinen has pulled away from Mitsubishi Team mate Kenneth Eriksson on the final day, profiting from running second through the stages, and leaving his Swedish colleague to plough tracks through fresh snow.

"Sometimes you can't even see the road and it is like aquaplaning, even on these tyres," said Eriksson.

The Mitsubishi's are beyond the reach of the phalanx of Toyotas, headed as local star Thomas Radstrom.

The world champion team will be content to finish and score some points, with Frenchman Didier Auriol saying: "Conditions are much

Cantona stages second attack

LONDON (AFP) — The future of French soccer star Eric Cantona was thrown into further doubt on Saturday after he was allegedly involved in another Kung-fu style assault while on holiday in the French overseas territory of Guadeloupe — a British television network said here on Saturday.

The Manchester United player, in the West Indies after his brawl with a Crystal Palace fan two weeks ago, has now been accused of becoming involved in a fracas with a television crew.

After United suspended Cantona for the rest of the season, chairman Martin Edwards warned that any such repetition would lead to the former French captain's dismissal.

Independent Television News (ITN) said here on Saturday that its crew went to the Caribbean island to ask Cantona when he is to return to England.

"Cantona became rather annoyed and angry and got hold of Terry Lloyd in a headlock and dragged him across the beach threatening to kill him," Mr. Fisher said.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Yannick Noah weds English model

PARIS (AP) — Two Rolls Royce limousines brought former tennis star and French Davis Cup captain Yannick Noah and British model Heather Stewart Whyte to their wedding Saturday in a small Brittany village. Noah, 34, and Miss Whyte arrived separately at the town hall of Saussey, making their way through a throng of photographers for the marriage ceremony, the second for Noah. The 1983 French Open champion and his bride then piled into one of the Rolls Royces to head to a nearby chateau for a dinner and late-night party. Among the guests were tennis player Guy Forget, numerous models from around the world, and Noah's two children from his first marriage to a Swedish model. Noah captained the 1991 French Davis Cup team that defeated the United States in the final to win the title.

Bubka predicts record improvement

DONETSK, Ukraine (R) — World champion Sergei Bubka said on Saturday that his world indoor pole vault record of 6.15 metres could be improved by as much as 15 centimetres. The 31-year-old Ukrainian said: "Hitting 6.20 metres is realistic. Hitting 6.30 is also realistic. Beyond that progress depends on the nature of new poles and what they're made of. These new materials make it impossible to make any predictions." Bubka set his latest world record at the Donetsk event in 1993. He has won each of the five previous events, which he promotes, and set world records at three of them.

Italian soccer in trouble again

LUCQUES, Italy (AFP) — Trouble broke out at an amateur football match here on Saturday when sport resumed in Italy following last month's murder. Three fans were held by the police and one man was detained in hospital with a suspected broken nose. Police made several charges to break up fighting fans after the match between Pietrasanta and Grosseto finished 1-1. All sporting fixtures were cancelled last weekend after a Genoa fan was stabbed to death by an AC Milan fan. The death, which sparked off street riots, provoked nationwide outrage.

Nine-man Barcelona crash again

MADRID (AFP) — Barcelona, still reeling from their shock 4-1 home defeat against Atletico Madrid in the Spanish Cup earlier in the week, had two players sent off as they crashed to a humiliating 5-0 defeat at Racing Santander in a first division clash Saturday night. Ironically John Cruyff's side dominated the first half and had more than half a dozen chances to score. But things went haywire in the second-half which saw goalkeeper Carlos Busquets and defender Albert Ferrer sent off. Stoichkov (30), Bakero (40) and Koriente (42) all squandered goalscoring chances for Barcelona. In the night's other match Atletico scored a comfortable 3-1 home win over Tenerife.

White Sox lose Jackson to Japan

NEW YORK (AFP) — Darrin Jackson signed a \$3.5 million, one-year contract with the Seibu Lions of Japan on Saturday after failing to agree to terms with the Chicago White Sox baseball team. "He's very happy about the opportunity to go," said Jackson's agent, Alan Meersand. Jackson, who became a free agent in October, hit .312 with 10 home runs and 51 runs batted in last season. Meersand said the White Sox offer was just too low. "He never really wanted to leave the White Sox, but they refused to pay his market value," Meersand said.

22 Malaysian players to be banned

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) — Twenty soccer players and two coaches are expected to be exiled to remote areas of Malaysia next month in connection with the nation's biggest sports bribery and match-fixing scandal. Deputy home minister Megat Junid Megat Ayob said warrants for their arrest would be issued a few days after the end of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan on March 3 and 4.

Rubber bridge vs. Duplicate

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH ©1994 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

GOREN BRIDGE

The big difference between rubber bridge and duplicate pairs is the importance of overtricks and undertricks in the latter. However, that does not necessarily mean you must adopt a different campaign on every hand, depending on the type of competition, but it can be vital on occasions. For instance, how would you play this deal at rubber bridge? Would you change your plan at duplicates?

The auction is immaterial. There no trump should be reached no matter what bidding methods you use. If you don't get there, consider changing your system.

With one low spade, as rubber bridge, you have no problem. Since you would not like East to gain the lead and shift to a heart, you rise with the ace of spades, force out the

ace of clubs and you have at least nine tricks no matter how the defense progresses.

What about at duplicate? Nine tricks are not the problem. But you won't be very happy with nine tricks when the rest of the field is making 10 or 11 by putting in the nine of spades. If you are the declarer, West has led away from the king, overtricks are sure. Unfortunately, if you choose to play low, East will win the king and the shift to a heart is obvious. The result — down two.

Don't let that bother you, though. We can bet that on checking the scores, you will have an average result. You are a rubber partner based on the lead, to hold the king of spades, so you can expect most declarers to play the hand exactly as you did.

"I wasn't feeling comfortable with the way the match was going until I broke him

Chang downs Courier to reach final

SAN JOSE (R) — Top seed Andre Agassi and second seed Michael Chang, who have been playing each other since childhood, advanced to a final round showdown at the \$328,000 San Jose Open. Second-ranked Agassi continued his assault on the number one spot with a 6-4 6-2 semifinal victory over fifth seed Malivai Washington Saturday.

A determined Chang, ranked sixth in the world, fought back from 1-4 down in the third set to pull out an exciting 4-6 7-6 (7-5) 6-4 victory over third seed Jim Courier in the other all-American semifinal.

"You know what to expect with Michael," Agassi said of the player he has been battling since juniors and who he beat en route to his U.S. Open title last September.

"He's the fastest guy on the tour and covers a lot of real estate out here. He's not going to give you anything and that's always tough."

"But I feel I have a little bit more firepower than him from the ground," Agassi said, assessing his chances.

Chang dropped the opening set to Courier's punishing ground stroking game, highlighted by a ferocious forehand.

But the two-time champion here regrouped and took the second set tie-break, aided by his much improved serve, which produced consecutive aces to force a third set.

The two exchanged early breaks in the deciding set and Courier came up with another service break in the fourth game on his way to a 4-1 third-set lead.

But Chang, who never gives up no matter what the deficit, is not one to let one service break get him down.

The second seed came roaring back, taking five straight games from the 11th-ranked Courier to clinch a place in the final after two hours and 14 minutes.

"We had some tired points, some very long points," said Chang. "He was moving me all over the place and I was moving him all over the place."

Courier, who knows Chang almost as well as Agassi, is still impressed by his fighting spirit.

"He picked up his game and put a little pressure on me, and got back into the match," said the former number one.

"He doesn't give up. Everybody should be like that."

Agassi, who is coming off a tremendous Australian Open victory over world number one Pete Sampras, did not show the form that made him champion in Melbourne, until midway through the first set Saturday.

The match turned in the sixth game of the third set, when Sabatini double-faulted twice in losing her serve to Chang.

The match ended when Sabatini netted a return.

The fact that the crowd in



Michael Chang returns a double-handed backhand

for 5-2. Then I found myself controlling everything," said Agassi after the 68-minute victory over the 40th-ranked Washington.

Chang is looking forward to renewing his rivalry with the hottest player in the world.

"I'm excited to play Andre, obviously," Chang said.

"I'm sure he'll be pumped up for tomorrow, and you can be sure I'll be pumped up as well."

Maleeva beats Sabatini

In Chicago, third-seeded Magdalena Maleeva took advantage of 14 double faults to beat second-seeded Gabriela Sabatini 6-4, 4-6, 6-3 on Saturday and advance to the finals of the Ameritech Cup tennis tournament.

Maleeva will meet the winner of the evening match between the seventh seed, Zina Garrison-Jackson, and Lisa Raymond in the title match on Sunday.

The 11th-ranked Maleeva utilized a vicious two-handed backhand to capture the first set, breaking Sabatini in the second game.

Sabatini broke Maleeva in the ninth game of the set with a great scoop passing shot to trail 5-4, only to give away the set with a double fault on set point in the 10th game.

"He doesn't give up. Everybody should be like that."

Agassi, who is coming off a tremendous Australian Open victory over world number one Pete Sampras, did not show the form that made him champion in Melbourne, until midway through the first set Saturday.

In the second set, Sabatini took a 5-4 lead when Maleeva hit a return out of bounds and then won it with a 157 mph service winner on set point.

The match turned in the sixth game of the third set, when Sabatini double-faulted twice in losing her serve to Chang.

The match ended when Sabatini netted a return.

The fact that the crowd in

with Vacek losing in his only other final.

The top-seeded Becker won the first set against de laire in 32 minutes then raced to a 4-0 lead before concluding the match in 61 minutes.

The three-time Wimbledon champion had lost in the first round of the Australian Open against Patrick McEnroe in January but led Germany to an easy victory over Croatia in the Davis Cup, teaming up with Michael Stich.

Ferreira, Gaudenzi in Dubai final

In Dubai, United Arab Emirates South Africa's Wayne Ferreira made it to his first Dubai Open tennis final in two appearances by edging out Spain's Javier Sanchez 5-7, 6-1, 6-4 in a semifinal Saturday.

Coming in straight after helping South Africa claim the Davis Cup outing against Australia in Durban earlier this month, No. 4 seed Ferreira failed to control his backhand in the opening set.

Sanchez, appearing in the semifinals of this \$1 million championship for the first time, was on a roll, venturing to the net more than his opponent and getting in the winners mainly on backhand slices.

Sanchez upset Ferreira's rhythm by breaking in the opening game for a 1-0 lead and once again in the vital ninth game for 5-4. The Spaniard however failed to hold his serve in the next, falling to a Ferreira forehand shot that ended a long baseline rally.

FURNISHED FLAT FOR RENT

Two bedrooms, living and dining, central heating and telephone, with private entrance, Jabal Amman, First Circle, near the British Council.

Tel: 624833 Amman.

TRAINING AND OFFICE SPACE NEEDED

The Water Quality Improvement and Conservation project/Ministry of Water and Irrigation desires to rent unfurnished space for a training Center, including 3 class rooms, 1 Computer Lab, 8 Offices, 2 Meeting rooms, 3 Toilet rooms, 1 kitchen, for a period of up to 2 years.

LOCATION

Within walking distance of Ministry Building.

SPACE NEEDED

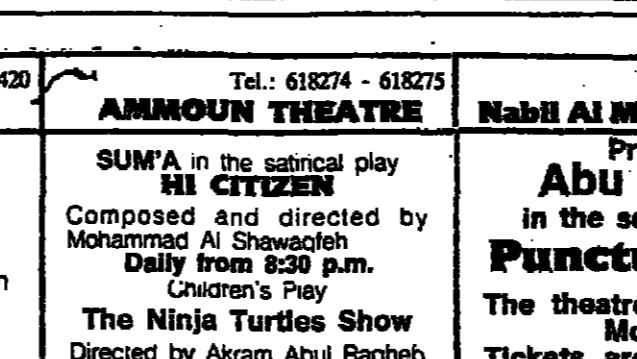
1350 - 1400 Sq. M., on one floor.

Rental price to include cost of utilities, some space modifications, installed telephone lines.

Interested parties please FAX details, with contact telephone /FAX numbers, Principals only, no agents, please

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Yusra, Mahmoud Hamedieh in The Immigrant	Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Eric Roberts & Geff Fabey in FREEFALL	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 8:30, 10:30	Sylvester Stallone — Sharon Stone in The Specialist	Shows: 3:45, 10:30	Sum'a in the satirical play HI CITIZEN	Composed and directed by Mohammad Al Shawafieh Daily from 8:30 p.m.	Abu Awwad in the social comedy Punctured Bag	Presents: Abu Awwad in the social comedy Punctured Bag	Presents: The political satire AL SALAM YA SALAM	at 8:30 p.m.

كما يحصل

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Jordan to give priority to 'stranded Palestinians'

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan will give priority to ensuring the return home of several thousand Palestinians "stranded" in Jordan during talks this month on the repatriation of Palestinians displaced during the 1967 war, according to senior officials and negotiators.

The estimated 60,000 to 80,000 Palestinians are different from the 900,000 or so Palestinians classified as "displaced" during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, the official explained.

The Israeli occupation authorities have denied them entry to their homeland after their post-1967 Israeli-issued permits expired.

"They cannot be classified as displaced persons since they were not displaced. They were permanent residents of the occupied territories even after the 1967 war whose exit and entry permits expired while they were outside their homeland," said a senior official.

"When you discuss the subject with the Israelis, they show all enthusiasm and you get a feeling that things would be done quickly," said the official. "But we have seen little practical action despite our repeated efforts," added the official, who preferred anonymity.

According to a Jordanian negotiator with Israel, most of these people were either studying in Jordan or elsewhere, expatriates in the Gulf or visitors to the Kingdom or other countries who could not return to the West Bank before their permits expired.

"The whole idea of de-

nying them entry is ridiculous," added the negotiator, who also spoke on condition of anonymity.

"But then, we have to deal with the reality that it is better to look forward and seek a solution to the problem rather than engage in polemics."

According to the official and the negotiator, Jordan will focus on the return home of this category of Palestinians as a priority during a meeting in Amman this month of Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) political department head Farouk Kadoum.

"It is clear that the return of these people would not pose any social or housing problems in the West Bank since they were living there until recent years," noted the negotiator, referring to Israel's argument against allowing the return of large numbers of Palestinians.

The Arab sides to the talks met in Cairo early this month in a bid to coordinate their stands ahead of the meeting with Israel. Details of the coordinated strategy have not been revealed except that the three — Jordan, Egypt and the PLO — had drawn up specific proposals and timetables for the return of the displaced.

Under the Sept. 13, 1993, declaration of principles signed by Israel and the PLO, the issue of "displaced" Palestinians will be discussed and resolved among the four parties.

Article XII of the declaration of principles states under the heading Liaison and

cooperation with Jordan and Egypt:

"The two parties will invite the governments of Jordan and Egypt to participate in establishing further liaison and cooperation arrangements between the government of Israel and the Palestinian representatives, on the one hand, and the governments of Jordan and Egypt, on the other hand, to promote cooperation between them. These arrangements will include the constitution of a continuing (permanent) committee that will decide by agreement on the modalities of admission of persons displaced from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, together with necessary measures to prevent disruption and disorder, other matters of common concern will be dealt with in this committee."

The Jordanian negotiator said the Kingdom "fully agreed with the stipulation that measures should be taken to prevent disruption and disorder" as the displaced return home. "We are as anxious as anyone to ensure that order is maintained throughout the process," said the negotiator.

Jordanian officials note that His Majesty King Hussein has repeatedly affirmed that no Jordanian of Palestinian origin would be forced to make a choice between returning to the West Bank or remaining in the Kingdom.

"It is a matter of free will and choice of the individual concerned, and Jordan would not ask anyone to leave the country or deny anyone the right to leave the Kingdom as and when such a choice is available," said the official.



Palestinians wait at the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron, hoping to be allowed in during the day's quota

Separation plan ready — Shahal

The Jerusalem Post

THE PLAN to separate Israel from the Palestinians has been completed and will be presented to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by the end of the month. Police Minister Moshe Shahal told political reporters last week, after attending the Rabin and Arafat meeting.

Shahal said the separation line will divide Israeli and Palestinians, but will not "indicate the future permanent line, or lead to political confrontations that will hinder the talks with the Palestinians."

The separation plan will enable stricter supervision of the Palestinians who enter Israel, without having to resort to closure, he said. Shahal noted, however, that a hermetic sealing of the territories is impossible, and warned that while terrorist attacks will be reduced, they cannot be stopped altogether.

Shahal said the separation line is not along the 1967 borders, and takes into consideration settlements such as Oramit and Arab villages that

the green line separated arbitrarily.

Shahal denied reports of an impasse in the talks between Israel and the PLO, and said it was possible to overcome the difficult ties. He said Rabin impressed on Arafat that terrorist attacks make it impossible to advance the autonomy agreement.

Shahal added:

Meanwhile, Environment Minister Yossi Sarid said last night that building a separation fence south of the Jewish settlements in the northern Gaza Strip would be a violation of the Cairo agreement, and is therefore out of the question.

However, residents of Dugit, Nissana and Eilei Shnaid say they will still be exposed to terror attacks if the fence is built to the north. This is why they have asked that an electronic separation fence be constructed to the south of their settlements. They said the fence would be similar to the one built west of Shira Hanegev and Gush Eshkol, which has ensured the security of those residents.

EU plans summit to boost Mideast role

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In a bid to further strengthen its role in the Middle East peace process, the European Union (EU) is preparing for a European Mediterranean economic summit to be held in November in Barcelona, Spain.

A French diplomat told the Jordan Times on Sunday the EU hopes the conference would come up with pledges totalling \$6.6 billion for aid and development in the Mediterranean region. The conference will bring together 15 European and 11 Mediterranean countries.

There is no fixed date for the conference but it is expected to be held in November this year.

"We will participate effectively in the conference in contrast with Casablanca summit where we didn't take part in its preparations," a European official said.

The aid package of \$6.6 billion comes as part of the European Union's endeavour

to encourage joint projects between Europe and Mediterranean countries, the French official said. It is also aimed at bolstering the economies of the countries in the region.

According to the official,

France also submitted a proposal to the European Union to allocate \$600 million in financial aid to countries participating in the peace process, mainly Jordan, Israel, the Palestinians and Egypt.

The assistance will be directed mainly towards financing joint economic projects between countries in the region, but will be separate from the allotted \$6.6 billion to all participating Mediterranean countries to the Barcelona conference.

The EU plans to play a key role in ensuring the conference's success," the official said.

The EU pledged \$570 million in aid to the Palestinians over five years — about a sixth of the total international aid package. French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said in

Beirut last week that \$117 million had been already spent on education and health. Another 20 million European Currency Units (\$24 million) will be allotted to projects in Jordan, informed sources said.

The EU is keen on maintaining strong ties with Jordan. Europe appreciates Jordan's endeavours and its leading role in the region," the official said.

One of the main objectives of the conference, European officials say, is to establish a free trade zone in the Middle East whereby European-Mediterranean economic exchange will be enhanced.

Officials say the conference also aims at enhancing bilateral relations in the political and cultural fields.

"The planned economic conference will present a good opportunity to further enhance European-Jordanian relations," the official said.

In a press briefing, on Saturday, Denis Bouchard, head of the North Africa and Middle East department at

the French Foreign Ministry, also said Europe's role in the Middle East "should not be neglected, but should go hand in hand with that of the United States."

"We support the U.S. in all its endeavours to achieve peace but there are historic and political links between the Middle East and Europe," said Mr. Bouchard, a former ambassador to Jordan. "Our role is complementary to that of the Americans," he added.

Mr. Bouchard arrived here earlier in the day to brief officials on a regional tour by three EU foreign ministers to discuss aid to Palestinians and help resolve the deadlock in Israel's negotiations with Syria and Lebanon.

He said the delegation also extended an invitation to Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad to attend the economic meeting in Spain.

"Syria showed interest in the conference," the official said.

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